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RY'S MEBACK —The Editors

Bush's Immigration Folly: Borjas, O'Sullivan, The Editors

NATIONAL REVIEW

Investor Nation

How the rise of mass investment is changing America

BY RAMESH PONNURU

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Richard Lowry on Wesley Clark
Byron York on Dennis Kucinich
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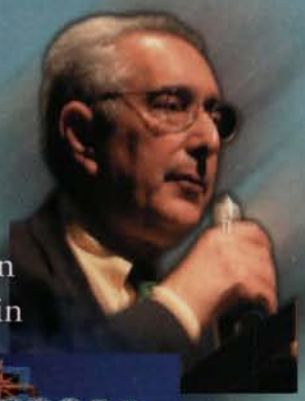

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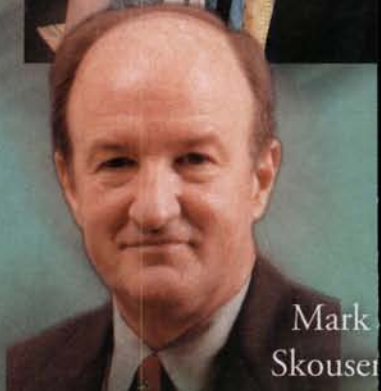

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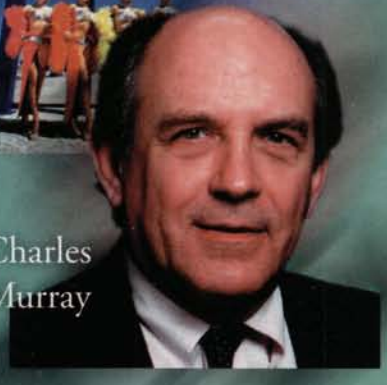

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FEBRUARY 9, 2004 VOL. LVI, NO. 2

NATIONAL REVIEW

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Investor Class, Investor Nation

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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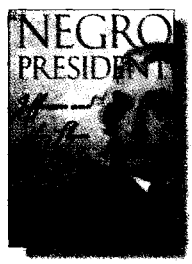
letters to the editor

FOUNDING QUIBBLE

In his review of my book, "*Negro President*" ("Piling on Jefferson," Dec. 22), Earl M. Maltz proves himself a virtuoso of the quibble.

1. He argues that it is false to say that the Constitution's three-fifths clause gave a man 300 extra votes for owning 500 slaves. It did not give the votes to him directly, but to his district's voting representation. Big difference.

2. He says that Jefferson did not lose the "real vote" because, if a hypothetical system were followed instead of the actual one, Jefferson would have won. By "real votes" I do not mean hypothetical ones, but ballots that were actually cast. The very historians Maltz praises in his review agree with me.



3. He says I repeat what is known, but the response to my book from reputable historians shows that even some of them were unaware of the consequences of the three-fifths vote. The general public was even more surprised by them. The men Maltz says originally documented these consequences have themselves lamented the fact that those results are not generally recognized. Two of the men he pits against me—William Freehling and Leonard Richards—have read and praised my manuscript, saying it was necessary for making these consequences more widely acknowledged.

4. It is absurd to question the anti-slavery credentials of Timothy Pickering, the champion of Toussaint L'Ouverture who was idolized by William Lloyd Garrison. Pickering and Hillhouse were firm allies throughout the Louisiana Purchase period. They were two of only five senators who voted against the purchase treaty as unconstitutional, and they later schemed to have New England withdraw from the Union in protest against the purchase. It is true that in votes over laws implementing the treaty, Pickering voted for some and against others, as he felt that they implied constitutionality (or did not) in the treaty. But he never wavered in his opposition to slavery. Even his critics, with all their charges, never believed that of him.

Garry Wills
Department of History
Northwestern University
Evanston, Ill.

EARL MALTZ REPLIES: *In responding to my review, Garry Wills employs what might be described as a strategy of confession and minimization.* "Negro President" *reduces the three-fifths clause to a grotesque caricature of itself? Big deal. Misstates the position of a prominent figure on slavery in Louisiana? A mere quibble. The central "insight" is not original? Well, it is still news to* somebody.

Of course, each reader can make his own judgment of the importance of my criticisms. I would merely point out that the problems cited in the review were chosen not only for their independent significance, but also to exemplify the appalling sloppiness that pervades Wills's book. (Other examples of analogous problems are cited in reviews by eminent historians Gordon Wood and Forrest McDonald.) Yet it is this general sloppiness that remains the most disturbing feature of the book.

One final thought: Mine is not the only negative review to which Wills has responded publicly. If, in the future, he puts as much effort into meeting the demands of his craft as he has into defending this book, "Negro President" *will no doubt be an aberration.*

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Closing In *on the* Achievement Gap

Kurt M. Landgraf,
President & CEO, ETS

The achievement gap – the difference in school performance among students of different backgrounds – is a serious and persistent problem. In enacting the No Child Left Behind Act, the federal government has made a commitment to do its part in addressing the problem. ETS is dedicated to doing its part in this vital effort also.

A new ETS report, *Parsing the Achievement Gap: Baselines for Tracking Progress*, clarifies fourteen factors in the challenge, including everything from birth weight, nutrition, parental support, and pupil mobility, to class size, school safety, teacher preparation and experience, and rigor of the curriculum. The ETS report found minority and low-income students are at a disadvantage relative to White and more affluent students in these conditions and experiences conducive to student achievement.

Our research confirms that what happens in the classroom is key to educational excellence. A teacher's skills have an enormous impact on how well a child learns. Class size, school safety, and the rigor of the school curriculum can also make or break a child's learning experience. Nothing that occurs before, or outside of, the school experience should be a basis – or an excuse – for lowering expectations for what can be accomplished by teachers and schools. And schools must be held accountable for their performance.

At the same time, total responsibility for a child's education cannot be placed solely on the schools. As U.S. Rep. John Boehner, Chair of the House Education and Workforce Committee, recently pointed out, "Parents play a pivotal role by reinforcing daily academic lessons with their children at home at night."

Closing the achievement gap will take time, resources, and the commitment of families, schools and communities. Such commitment pays off. Recently, school officials in Montgomery County, Maryland, reported significant gains in reading for lower-income minority students in full-day kindergarten programs. In addition to increasing the number of hours children spend in kindergarten, the county revised its kindergarten program to provide more teacher training, a revamped curriculum, and smaller classes.

The achievement gap can be closed, and we must use this historic moment to see that it is. Nothing we can do will contribute more to ensure equality, opportunity, a strong economy, and a healthy democracy. ETS is fully committed to the cause. We will continue to listen to the education community and to learn from that community as well as from research, and we will do our part to lead the way in advocating both informed public policy and informed educational practice.

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■ In CNN/*USA Today* poll, President **Bush** posts 59 percent approval rating. . . . Bush: "Mankind is drawn to the heavens for the same reason we were once drawn into unknown lands and across the open sea. We choose to explore space because doing so improves our lives, and lifts our national spirit. So let us continue the journey." . . . Bush: "The best way to eradicate poverty is to encourage trade between nations." . . . Bush: "I oppose amnesty because it encourages the violation of our laws and perpetuates illegal immigration. My proposal expects that most temporary workers will eventually return permanently to their home countries. . . . This program will be more humane, humane to workers, and will live up to the highest ideals of our nations." . . . In Pew Hispanic Center poll, 37 percent of Hispanics plan to vote for Bush and 47 percent say they will prefer Democratic nominee. . . . FBI director **Robert Mueller** on al-Qaeda in United States: "We quite probably will at some point in time have another attack." . . . Sen. **Ted Kennedy** (D., Mass.): "The president broke the basic bond of trust between the government and the people. If Congress and the American people knew the whole truth, America would never have gone to war."

■ NBC/*Wall Street Journal* poll: Bush leads all potential Democratic nominees by at least 17 points. Closest challenger is **Wesley Clark**. . . . Clark on abortion: "Life begins with the mother's decision." . . . More Clark: "If I'm president of the United States, I'm going to take care of the American people. We are not going to have one of these [terrorist] incidents." . . . Republican National Committee chairman **Ed Gillespie**: "Just remember that in January 2002, [Clark] told *Newsweek* magazine that he would have been a Republican 'if **Karl Rove** had only returned my phone calls.' You know, some people run for president because they hear a call. Apparently, Wesley Clark is running because he didn't."

■ Former senator **Carol Moseley Braun** (D., Ill.) quits presidential race and endorses Dean. . . . In District of Columbia's non-binding Democratic primary—no delegates to national convention at stake—**Howard Dean** finishes first and **Al Sharpton** second. . . . In Fox News poll, 19 percent say they would be more likely to vote for candidate if endorsed by **Bill Clinton**, 19 percent less likely, 60 percent no difference. . . . **Al Gore**: "While President Bush likes to project an image of strength and courage, the truth is that, in the presence of his large financial contributors, he is a moral coward—so weak that he seldom if ever says 'no' to them on anything—no matter what the public interest might mandate." . . . In *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll, GOP lead over Democrats on ability to "control government spending" slips from 28 points in 1996 to 2 points today.

■ Rep. **Elton Gallegly** (R., Calif.) on congressional prospects of Bush immigration plan: "Based on the conceptual plan as laid out, it's highly unlikely it will ever see the light of day." . . . In ABC News poll, 52 percent oppose immigration proposal and 41 percent support. . . . Virginia Gov. **Mark Warner** (D.) on tax-hike proposal, in *Washington Post*: "Call it a revenue enhancement or a user fee and [if] it gets the job done, I'll be satisfied." . . . In University of Connecticut poll, 58 percent say Gov. **John Rowland** (R.) should resign after admitting he lied about state contractor doing work on summer cottage. . . . In Texas, Sen. **Kay Bailey Hutchison** refuses to rule out bid to replace Gov. **Rick Perry** (R.) in 2006. . . . Former Atlanta mayor Andrew Young (D.) attends Bush fundraiser.

■ In California, former GOP secretary of state **Bill Jones** enters race against Sen. **Barbara Boxer** (D.), though she maintains 7-point lead over generic Republican opponent in Public Policy Institute of California poll. . . . In Field Poll, Gov. **Arnold Schwarzenegger** earns 52 percent approval rating. . . . Former governor **David Beasley** (R.) enters race to replace retiring Sen. **Ernest Hollings** (D., S.C.). . . . Sen. **Hillary Clinton** (D., N.Y.): "Americans need a new, modern, 21st-century version of health care delivery, based on the premise of information in the hands of the right people at the right time." . . . Sen. Clinton may face tough reelection in 2006, according to Marist College poll: She runs even at 46 percent with Gov. **George Pataki** (R.) and trails former New York City mayor **Rudy Giuliani**, 50 percent to 45 percent. . . . U.S. and Canadian warplanes have scrambled almost 1,700 times since 9/11 to intercept or divert suspicious aircraft, reports AP. . . . NR accepting applications for a summer internship. Interested college students should apply to Internship, NATIONAL REVIEW, 215 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016.

■ U.S is home to 20 percent of world's migrants, according to United Nations. . . . Libya agrees to pay $170 million to compensate families of 170 victims in the 1989 bombing of UTA flight 772, known as "the forgotten flight" because Lockerbie incident overshadowed it. . . . Cuba bans Internet access via government phone lines. . . . Egypt bans foreign belly dancers to protect jobs of native ones. . . . French president **Jacques Chirac** invites Bush to 60th-anniversary celebration of D-Day landings in Normandy in June.

■ **David Letterman**: "It was like 10 degrees here in New York City and Al Gore today . . . he was giving a speech down the street on global warming. And I worry that my timing is off!" **NR**

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High Tech Job Flight Threatens our Security and Prosperity

The dramatically quickening flight overseas of high tech and professional jobs represents the ultimate betrayal of American workers by current U.S. trade and globalization policies. At risk are Americans' future livelihoods, our country's world technological leadership, and thus our national security.

During the 1990s tech boom, globalization supporters confidently made a promise to Americans: If they seized new opportunities to retrain and re-skill themselves, they could stay ahead of global competition, easily move from vanishing smokestack manufacturing to the better paying "industries of the future."

Yet in the next decade, literally millions of jobs in fields ranging from software engineering to financial analysis to accounting and even government record processing are likely to move to low-wage countries like India. And the technological knowhow to make the world's most advanced products - including weapons - will move with them.

Even during the tech boom, the globalizers' promise rang hollow. For example, though growing rapidly, the total number of technology and professional jobs remained meager. And existing retraining programs had a dismal record. The globalizing of even the choicest occupations, however, shows that even overcoming these obstacles won't bring economic security. It also discourages young Americans from studying science and technology, and refilling our national talent pool.

High tech and professional job flight is often defended as a natural outcome of economic evolution. Yet it usually stems from specific U.S. trade policies that encourage American companies to supply the U.S. market from penny-wage labor countries. Indeed,once blue-collar manufacturing production work was offshored during 1980s and 1990s manufacturing's white-collar jobs were sure to follow once technology permitted. After all, why keep these functions thousands of miles apart? Numerous service providers can duplicate this business model, too.

But if trade policies have promoted these practices, then trade policies can end them. Washington must encourage U.S. manufacturing and service companies to supply the U.S. market from facilities at home. Our technology future and all its economic and security benefits can only be Made in America.

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THE WEEK

■ The State of the Union reaction shot we wish we had seen: Ted Kennedy when President Bush urged support for his abstinence program.

■ How low will a man stoop in the quest to become president? Consider the recent statements of retired General Wesley Clark. Early in January, in an interview with the Manchester *Union Leader*, Clark took pandering to the abortion lobby to a new level when he said he had no objections to abortion being legal right up until the moment of birth. "No limits?" the paper asked. "Nope," Clark replied. Also in New Hampshire, Clark has kept up his attacks on the Iraq war—he wants Congress to investigate whether the president's war decision was a "criminal offense"—even as the press has begun to notice the numerous pro-war statements he made before becoming a candidate. Among them: Clark's declaration last April that "President Bush and Tony Blair should be proud of their resolve in the face of so much doubt." And finally, on January 17, Clark accepted the endorsement of the Bush-hating filmmaker Michael Moore, the man who famously wondered why terrorists attacked New York on 9/11 when there were so many other, more attractive targets filled with Bush voters. Clark smiled and embraced Moore. How low will a man go? Wesley Clark is showing the way.

■ The most entertaining feature of the 2004 campaign season so far has been the slow implosion of the Howard Dean campaign. Implosion, or explosion? It is hard to tell. The whole phenomenon resembles one of those dire episodes of stellar collapse, where the outer layers of a star fall in on the inner ones, blasting superheated matter out into space as they do so, the whole thing ending as a wildly spinning but barely visible neutron star. Combine all this drama with Dean's maladroit attempts to endear himself to groups of citizens (Southerners, Christians, etc.) about whom he is obviously clueless, and the spectacle is riveting. At a town hall-style meeting on the Iowa trail, the candidate was confronted by a mild-mannered 66-year-old voter who urged him to heed the Biblical injunction to love thy neighbor and stop speaking so rudely about the president. "George Bush is not my neighbor," snapped Dean. When the voter tried to clarify his point, he was incinerated by a blast of incandescent gas: "You sit down! You've had your say, and now I'm going to have my say." Asked about the exchange later, Dean expostulated that: "It is time not to put up [with] any of this 'love thy neighbor.'" Possibly the Vermont governor just did not recognize the reference, not being familiar with that part of the New Testament. Still, he ought to be able to empathize with the president to some degree. Does not Job complain: "I am as one mocked of his neighbor"?

■ When President Bush went to Atlanta to lay a wreath on the grave of Martin Luther King Jr., on the 75th anniversary of his birth, he was greeted by protesters shouting, "Bush, go home" and "Peace, not war." A representative of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference questioned the "integrity" of Bush's timing "because last year at this time he took a stand against affirmative action . . . which is part of Dr. King's legacy." National figures have many legacies, and the nation makes its own selection when it gives them honor. King's black-liberal claque may indeed be right about the vectors of his thought at the end of his life. But they no longer define the matter. If King is an example and an inspiration to all, then the President of the United States, in his role as *pontifex maximus* of the American civil religion, will, and should, honor him. But if King is still a partisan figure in the scrum of politics, let us revoke the holiday and wait another fifty years for matters to clear.

ROMAN GENN

Al Gore's judgment has not been so great of late. He endorsed Howard Dean for president just before the Dean campaign cratered in Iowa, and on the coldest day of the year, he took the stage in New York City to warn the nation about global warming.

■ In a famously tight-lipped administration, former Treasury secretary Paul O'Neill has become the first major figure to tell unflattering tales out of school. In *The Price of Loyalty*, O'Neill accuses Bush of being disengaged from domestic business, but very engaged in toppling Iraq, even before 9/11 changed the nation's threat perception. The author of the book in which

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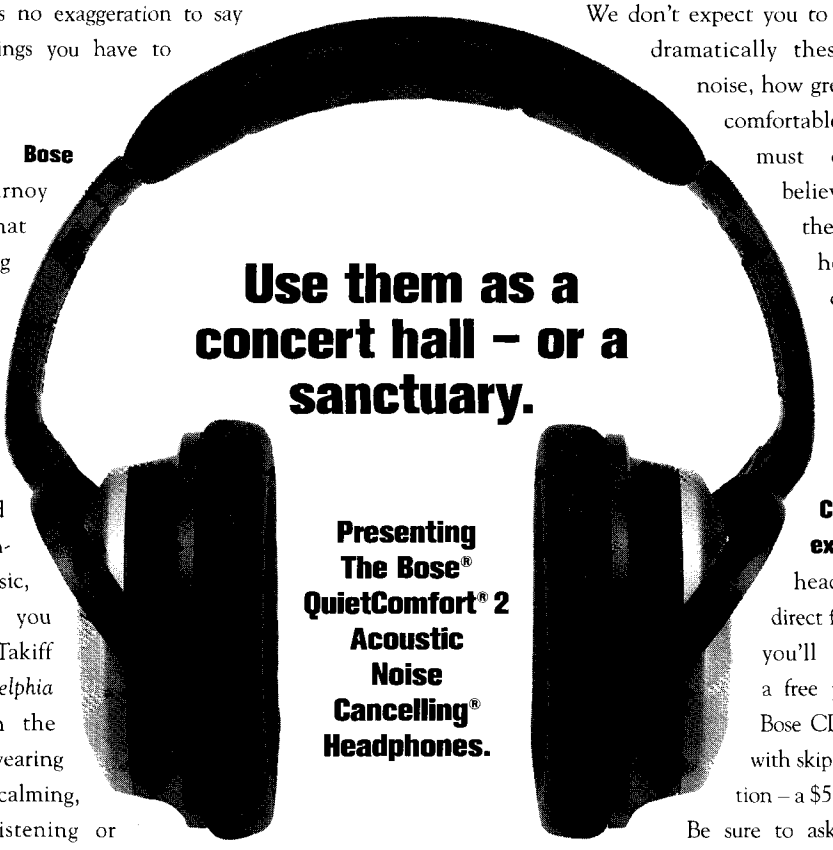

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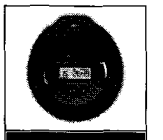

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The Week...

O'Neill unburdens himself is, interestingly, Ron Suskind, a journalist who snagged the previous biggest Bush defector, John J. DiIulio Jr., former head of the White House's faith-based-policy office, revealing his complaints in an article in *Esquire*. Birds of a feather flock together—or does Suskind elicit only certain kinds of song? On the evidence of their accounts, both O'Neill and DiIulio are opinionated, strong-willed, and not very clubbable men. Maybe Bush should cultivate such people, but clearly he does not—and clearly such men resent him for it. As for the announcement that Bush precociously disliked Iraq, what is the surprise? Bush identified Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as dangerous rogue nations as early as 1999, when he was campaigning for office. Bush's predecessor, Bill Clinton, had made "regime change" in Iraq a priority in 1998. Were they wrong?

■ In the matter of space exploration, the split personalities of the conservative soul war with each other: the hard-headed man of business, vs. the romantic. President Bush has proposed to return to the Moon by 2020, as a launch pad for Mars. In doing so, he will end the wasteful holding operation of the space shuttle, which was about as scientifically useful as the New York/D.C. shuttle. How will he pay for his grand designs, since he seems intent on leaving no earthly need unfunded? The knowledge humanity will acquire could be obtained, far more cheaply, by unmanned probes. Yet knowledge, precious though it is, was always the second reason for space exploration. The first is going there. Sending a drone in place of the *Nina*, *Pinta,* and *Santa Maria* wouldn't have been the same, would it?

■ It's about time. For more than a year, conservatives, Republicans, and advocates of simple justice have wondered whether President Bush would use his power to make recess appointments to fill seats on the federal judiciary that are currently the targets of Democratic filibusters. Now he has. On January 16, the president appointed Charles Pickering to the appeals court for which he was originally nominated on May 25, 2001. Pickering can now serve until the end of the current Congress next January. It's a good arrangement for the 66-year-old judge, who will retire when that time comes. But it wouldn't work for other filibuster victims such as Bill Pryor, who are in mid-career and would most likely have to give up the chance for a lifetime appointment in exchange for 12 months on the bench. Still, the president could appoint a group of distinguished, late-career jurists to those places, a move which would a) provide overworked courts with some much-needed help, and b) tell Democrats the White House won't be pushed around. Senator Charles Schumer, a leader of the filibusters, called Pickering's appointment "a finger in the eye." Why not a few more?

■ Should the federal government try to help low-income couples develop the skills and habits that will make for healthy marriages? President Bush thinks that such counseling, which would be strictly voluntary, is worth spending $1.5 billion on. The initiative is an old one, but it has received some publicity recently. Plenty of people—including conservatives who acknowledge that marriage is a social as well as a personal concern—are expressing skepticism. We don't know whether counseling will actually succeed in increasing the marriage rate and decreasing the divorce rate. Conservatives should not, however, oppose Bush's idea reflexively. The federal government has made the success of individuals on welfare its business. A healthy marriage is (among other things!) an important route to success. The federal government will provide poor people with cash, food stamps, child care, job training, and so on. Why should marriage counseling be the one tool the federal government denies them? We are inclined to be cautious supporters of the president's plan. But we also realize that its potential is limited. If it is implemented, the federal government will still be spending far more money on subsidizing illegitimacy than on promoting marriage. Funding for counseling is not a substitute for a more serious pro-marriage agenda.

■ When the mayors of Bridgeport and Waterbury found themselves mired in scandal and criminal charges in recent years, Connecticut governor John Rowland urged them to resign, saying they would be unable to lead their cities while mired in huge controversies. He was right. Now that the Republican governor finds himself in a similar pickle—he is accused of taking vacations, tickets, home remodeling, dirt bikes, a hot tub, and more from staff and state contractors, top aides have been indicted, impeachment looms, a federal grand jury is on the hunt, etc.—Rowland should heed his own sound advice. Whether he goes of his own accord (doubtful), or via the legislature's boot, or wearing the FBI's handcuffs, it will be no great loss. Rowland was once a conservative congressman, but as governor has drifted ever leftward. The income tax that he promised to eradicate when he first ran survives and, courtesy of his signature, has an even higher rate. That is one of many political and policy sins, which, along with his personal hubris and arrogance, and his addiction to freebies, make Rowland a thoroughly unattractive figure. About the only good thing one can say is that he's not as detestable as his predecessor, Lowell Weicker. But then who is?

Bunched Up in N.H.

The Democrats were not supposed
To clump up like bad drains,
So Dr. Dean tried Drano from
That witch doc down in Plains;
Alas, those up-front primaries—
Like Dali's pix—still wend
Beyond the blue horizon as
McAuliffe screams, "The end!"

—W. H. von Dreele

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Who Could Be against "Adequate" School Funding?

Eric A. Hanushek is the Paul and Jean Hanna Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and a member of Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education.

Many states are currently locked in court battles in which they are being sued to provide "adequate" funding for their schools. These adequacy suits, which have spilled over into legislatures, represent yet another example of a situation where words and slogans do not match reality.

For three decades state school funding has been driven by a series of court cases concerned with fiscal equity. These cases have a common argument: the individual state constitutions require a greater parity in spending between rich and poor school districts than is typically observed under mixed state and local funding.

But the supporters of the lawsuits were dismayed by the end results. In fact, some state legislatures that were required by the courts to equalize spending across districts did not come up to the highest-spending districts but instead kept the overall level constant. The proponents of these suits were unhappy because their desire had been to pry more school spending out of the states.

In reaction to this apparently unfortunate outcome, a new kind of lawsuit and argument developed—the need for *adequate* spending. Under this new legal strategy, a system could be equalized but could still be inadequate to provide an appropriate education. For example, one group claimed that New York State was not providing the constitutionally required adequate spending to New York City, even though New York City schools were spending more than the average being spent in forty-two states.

For the proponents of greater school spending, adopting the word "adequate" was a great coup, similar to adopting the word "equity" many years before. Surely we all want both equitable and adequate spending.

The crucial ingredient to these arguments is an implicit presumption that spending translates directly to school quality. Unfortunately, **a massive amount of evidence indicates that spending on schools is not closely related to school quality or student learning**.

How could this be? In the simplest terms there are too few incentives that reward good performance and too few disincentives to penalize poor performance in our public schools. Schools introduce unproven and unproductive programs. They overpay poor teachers (and underpay good teachers). They tolerate ineffective administrators at the state, district, and individual school level. In sum, they do not ensure that any additional funds will be spent in ways that improve student learning.

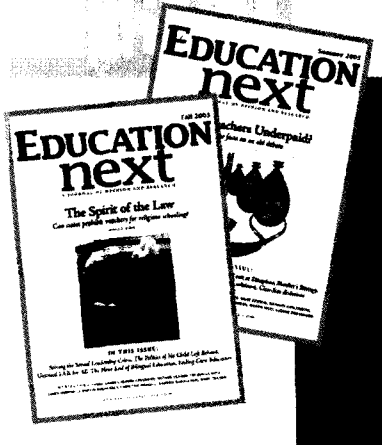
Because funding is not related either to overall student performance or to the performance of specific groups—minorities, disadvantaged students, or urban students—it is not a good index of equity. Nor is it possible to calculate how much needs to be spent to ensure adequate student performance.

Thus, when legislatures search for adequacy in funding or when courts demand it, they do not realize that it is a search for the Holy Grail—a noble but ultimately futile effort. The proponents of adequacy on the other hand know exactly what is going on. By exploiting this term, they are able to press for greater spending, knowing that whatever is spent now will be insufficient and that more will be needed tomorrow.

When asked to rally around equity and adequacy in education, be skeptical because those words do not mean what you think they do.

— Eric A. Hanushek

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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THE WEEK...

■ Osbaldo Torres came to the United States from Mexico when he was five years old. Thirteen years later, he murdered a couple in front of their children in Oklahoma. He was sentenced to death, and has been on death row for nearly a decade. Mexico has challenged his conviction before the International Court of Justice in The Hague, on the ground that Torres was not told he could contact the nearest Mexican consul after his arrest. Nations do extend this courtesy to the citizens of other nations, but the Torres case raises two special points. Mexico is not just any nation, but a neighbor that is a vast source of legal and illegal immigrants, over whom Mexico wishes to assert creeping sovereignty (Mexican immigrants with dual citizenship are encouraged to vote in Mexican elections)—an assertion that should be roundly denied. Also to be denied is the notion that grievances between Mexico and the United States should be submitted to a court in Holland, not ironed out directly. Drew Edmondson, the attorney general of Oklahoma, has stayed Torres's execution "out of courtesy" to the Hague court. Out of courtesy to the citizens of Oklahoma, we suggest that Mr. Edmondson practice law and politics in some more congenial jurisdiction, perhaps south of the border.

■ We are going to hear a great deal more about Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. A learned and experienced man, he lives in a modest house in the city of Najaf, and belongs to a quietist school of Shia thought that believes that clerics like him should stay in the mosque and leave government to politicians. So far he refuses even to meet L. Paul Bremer or any coalition officials. But Shia Iraqis form almost two-thirds of the population, and they are drawing Sistani into the current political maelstrom, and making him their figurehead. Coalition officials and the interim Iraqi Governing Council had agreed to select caucuses around the country as the preliminary step in the self-government due to start at the end of June. The procedure was cumbersome, leading to suspicions that those in charge were trying to predetermine the outcome. Calling instead for direct elections, Sistani has thrown the plan into turmoil. There are no reliable censuses or voter rolls, and no time for such indispensable mechanics. In direct elections, the Shia can expect to come out on top; in setting up caucuses, the Kurds and Sunnis and other minorities hope to gain advantage. Showing what he can do, Sistani's lightest utterance brings tens of thousands out on the streets. The future of Iraq depends on his negotiating skills and willingness to compromise.

■ General Pervez Musharraf, president of Pakistan, is in the front line of the war against terror. All sorts of local Islamist groups, Taliban supporters, Wahhabi fundamentalists awash with Saudi money, and Kashmiri extremists are fighting for power by all the means at their disposal. Should any of them succeed, Pakistan will join the sad roster of failed states, leaving its nuclear weaponry in the most dangerous hands imaginable. September 11 was the writing on the wall for Musharraf. Since then, he has gradually—much too gradually—been bringing himself to crack down on the assorted Islamists at home. Equally important, he has started to back away from the confrontation that so nearly led to war with India two years ago. At a meeting early in January, Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee agreed to work to resolve their differences peacefully. The omens are promising. The two countries have resumed rail service across their frontiers. The Pakistani authorities are moving with more determination against terrorists and extremists, who in return have only just failed to assassinate Musharraf on two separate occasions. In a recent address, Musharraf called for a "jihad" against Islamist violence, causing his opponents to jeer and walk out. Let's hope he means it.

■ Longtime readers of NR will remember that Rep. Peter King, Republican from New York, used to appear regularly in our pages—especially our letters pages, where he would joust with us over Northern Ireland. He would vigorously defend IRA leader Gerry Adams, for example, as a misunderstood patriot rather than the terrorist we believed him to be. The congressman tells us that he is set to release a new novel, *Vale of Tears*, and that it depicts Tony Blair as a good guy and the IRA as a gang of thugs in league with al-Qaeda. A small victory in the war on terrorism.

■ Gussie Moran scandalized the world of tennis back in 1949 when she showed up for her second match at Wimbledon wearing decorative lace panties under her skirt. Women's soccer in 2004 is just as puritanical, it seems, though of course for utterly different reasons. When the president of FIFA, the international governing body for soccer, suggested that the women's game might be more popular if the players wore tighter shorts, he was furiously rebuked by just about everybody. Julie Foudy, president of the Women's Sports Foundation, growled: "We'll start wearing tighter shorts when he starts doing press conferences in his bathing suit." Taking the matter even further, from bathing suits to birthday suits, Norwegian soccer gal Lise Klaveness said: "If the crowd only wants to come and watch models, then they should go and buy a copy of *Playboy*." Now, the main problem with women's soccer, as was demonstrated by the collapse of the Women's United Soccer Association last fall, is that not enough people do want to come and watch it, for any reason. The man from FIFA was just trying to help; but of course, no good deed goes unpunished, especially when carried out with insufficient "sensitivity."

■ After a long and difficult evaluation, the designs for our architectural response to 9/11 have been chosen; the results appear surprisingly good. The selected memorial is Michael Arad and Peter Walker's "Reflecting Absence," and it will be joined at the WTC site by David Childs's "Freedom Tower," which seems to dematerialize as it approaches its crowning spire and reaches toward infinity, embodying the very essence of a skyscraper—the early signature of Manhattan. It improves upon the hunched structures of the late World Trade Center, which, however tall, were two boxes—the soul of limitation. The new memorial's reflecting pools, set to occupy the footprints of the former towers, invite contemplation; below ground, a mausoleum contains the remains of the unidentified dead; a museum holds artifacts from the old structures; and the

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surrounding greenery suggests rebirth. Yet the space—like the city—remains defined by its boundlessness. Visiting New York right after WWII, Jean Paul Sartre made a lasting observation: At either end of Manhattan's side streets, and also as you look south or north on the avenues, nothing blocks your view—everything leads into blue infinity. That is the spirit of modernity, that is the spirit of capitalism. That is the spirit of our open future, of recovery, and of hope.

■ This issue of National Review goes to press on January 22-23, the 125th anniversary of the battle of Rorke's Drift, one of the most remarkable episodes in military history. At this small, unprotected South African missionary station, in a battle lasting 16 hours, 80 British infantrymen, firing ordinary rifles from behind a makeshift wall of biscuit boxes and mealie bags, repulsed an assault by 4,000 Zulu warriors. The story has been told many times, notably in the 1964 movie *Zulu*, and also by our own Victor Davis Hanson in his book *Carnage and Culture*. This astonishing victory of Western arms was, as Hanson makes clear, brought about not by any innate difference in the courage, vigor, or individual abilities of the two forces. Nor was it a matter of technological superiority: The Zulus had just annihilated a British force twenty times larger at Isandhlwana, and were well supplied with rifles and ammunition. What carried the day was discipline and training. Hanson: "[I]n the long annals of military history, it is difficult to find anything quite

The Big Binge

A FEW weeks ago, President Bush invited a group of conservative economists to the White House. The president and his men wanted advice on what steps should be taken next to help the economy grow. The response was nearly unanimous among the dozen attendees: start cutting government spending. Not long after, Treasury secretary John Snow announced that a top economic priority for the Bush administration in 2004—and, we hope, in a second term—will be "fiscal restraint." It's about time.

Until recently, the White House has been in a state of denial on the spending problem in Washington. In fact, the Bush team has been prickly about criticism from conservatives about the return of big government under this president. Uncle Sam's waistline has grown by more than a half-trillion dollars in just three years, despite a Republican House, Senate, and White House. The Office of Management and Budget has finagled data to make it appear that the only reason the budget is expanding is the War on Terror. Wrong. It is certainly correct that the budget has grown substantially in the vital areas of national defense and homeland security, but the unappealing truth is that under this president, the budget has expanded in almost every agency—no matter how wasteful, redundant, or counterproductive.

Who's the Biggest Spender of Them All?

	Fiscal Years	% Increase in Domestic Discretionary Spending
Lyndon Johnson	1965-69	4.3%
Richard Nixon	1970-75	6.8%
Gerald Ford	1976-77	8.0%
Jimmy Carter	1978-81	2.0%
Ronald Reagan	1982-89	-1.3%
George Bush, Sr.	1990-93	4.0%
Bill Clinton	1994-01	2.5%
George W. Bush	2002-04	8.2%

SOURCE: U.S. OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, HISTORICAL TABLES, 2004

The table above shows that inflation-adjusted domestic discretionary spending under President Bush has grown faster than under any other president in 40 years.

Brian Riedl of the Heritage Foundation has been examining how much of the budget growth in recent years is due to national-security spending. Riedl finds that when you tease out all the anti-terrorism spending, it's still true that "domestic non-security programs are growing at their fastest rate in a decade." Even obsolete agencies that Republicans have long wanted to disconnect from life support are thriving in the hands of Republican appropriators. Says John Berthoud, president of the National Taxpayers Union: "For the first time in many years we are seeing that Republicans are outspending the Democrats."

The original Contract with America budget in 1995 slated more than 200 programs for termination. They are as useless today as ever, and yet in almost all cases, their budgets are bigger, not smaller. Many of these programs are little more than political slush funds for left-leaning special-interest constituencies: the Legal Services Corporation, bilingual-education funds, the National Endowment for the Arts, Bill Clinton's army of $12-per-hour Americorps "volunteers" . . .

Even more outrageous are programs like the TVA and the Rural Electrification Administration, which are so antiquated that Barry Goldwater pledged to shut them down 40 years ago when he ran for president. The price tags and the cobwebs are much bigger now. The Republicans have even given beefy increases to the most reviled of all federal agencies: the IRS, whose budget is up 67 percent since 1995.

Many preposterous spending programs receive funding by becoming stowaways on anti-terrorism bills. In recent years, national-security bills have included billions in add-on pork, including money for skating rinks, the Cowgirl Hall of Fame, and locust eradication. Nowadays if you want funding for a favored program, you wrap the flag around it.

A few years ago, John Kasich, Budget Committee chairman in the 1990s (and the best there ever was), dejectedly declared: "We Republicans fought a war against big government, and big government won." Ah, yes, but at least back then they fought. It's time for George W. Bush to take his chainsaw and fell some nonsensical federal programs. Not only would that make restless fiscal conservatives like me mighty happy, it would do the U.S. economy a world of good.

—STEPHEN MOORE

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—The Wall Street Journal

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—Dean Rieck,
Direct Marketing magazine
April 2000

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like Rorke's Drift, where a beleaguered force, outnumbered forty to one, survived and killed twenty men for every defender lost. But then it is also rare to find warriors as well trained as European soldiers, and rarer still to find any Europeans as disciplined as the British redcoats of the late nineteenth century." May our civilization long continue to field troops of this quality against our enemies.

CAMPAIGN 2004

Wide Open

THE Iowa caucuses have a bad rap, justifiably. They are dominated, as Howard Dean once said, by special interests that drag the Democratic party to the left. But this year the caucuses deserve their due. Presented a frontrunner with overwhelming financial resources and the endorsement of such important figures as Al Gore and Sen. Tom Harkin, Iowa Democrats not only looked elsewhere, but dealt him a severe blow. They apparently saw the poison in Howard Dean's political persona (he has perfected the art of demagogic insincerity), while his passionate antagonism to the Iraq war had a limited constituency even within the Democratic party.

Republican partisans will have mixed feelings about the result. Dean is the least electable of the major Democratic candidates. Hence the tongue-in-cheek recent NR cover with Dean's picture and the words, "Please Nominate This Man." But given the importance of the Democratic party to our national life, it is better that it be as responsible as possible. For Dean to win the Democratic nomination—with his total rejection of a good part of the War on Terror, from the Patriot Act to the war in Iraq, and his advocacy of a tax increase for everyone who pays income taxes in America—would in itself represent a lurch to the left for our politics. That it now seems less likely is to be celebrated.

This is not to say that Dean is necessarily finished. He has a committed national base of supporters, the ability to raise money, and a fighting chance in New Hampshire. Even if he sinks, his influence will linger. The field has, to a significant extent, been Deanified. The most passionate supporters of the Iraq war in that field were Dick Gephardt and Joe Lieberman. One is now gone from the race, and the other barely in it.

John Kerry, the immediate beneficiary of Dean's Iowa stumble, avoids some of his excesses. He rejects a full repeal of the Bush tax cuts—and made that an issue in Iowa—and is confused about the Iraq war rather than uniformly hostile. But Kerry has felt Dean's tug. It is hard to tell from his rhetoric that he voted for the war. He also voted in favor of the Patriot Act, the No Child Left Behind Act, and NAFTA—and now attacks all three. If he is the nominee, he will wage a fight this year not just against President Bush, but against his own legislative record. (Edwards would have a similar problem.)

With four respectable, experienced Washington politicians to choose from, it always seemed odd that the Democrats would rush into the arms of the untested and wild Howard Dean and his similarly irresponsible competitor Wes Clark, who is basically Dean with medals. Both Kerry and the other Iowa winner, John Edwards, represent a Democratic party that is wrong about a lot of things, but has not fully surrendered to the vitriol and fatuousness of its Dean/moveon.org wing. Good for Iowa.

THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Ready for Battle

PRESIDENT BUSH's State of the Union address gave the impression of a man eager to go out on the hustings and refute his critics—indeed, frustrated that he has not been able to do so. It was a campaign speech. One by one, he picked apart the Democrats' arguments. The war on terror is a war, he insists, not a legal action: "After the chaos and carnage of September 11th, it is not enough to serve our enemies with legal papers. The terrorists and their supporters declared war on the United States—and war is what they got." The administration had built a broad international coalition for its action in Iraq, and critics were wrong to "dismiss their sacrifices." Action in Iraq had led directly to progress in Libya: "Nine months of intense negotiations involving the United States and Great Britain succeeded with Libya, while twelve years of diplomacy with Iraq did not. And one reason is clear: For diplomacy to be effective, words must be credible—and no one can now doubt the word of America."

The president was similarly combative on education. He defended his No Child Left Behind Act. We did not like that bill, ourselves, but Bush's critique of the left-wing complaints about it were dead-on. It is not too much to ask that the schools produce third-graders who can read at third-grade levels, and testing is the way to make sure that they do so. "This nation will not go back to the days of simply shuffling children along from grade to grade without them learning the basics." (But shouldn't that "them" have been a "their"?)

There was something in the speech for most conservatives. Law-and-order conservatives learned that the president is prepared to defend the Patriot Act during the campaign. Free-market conservatives got a renewed call for making the tax cuts permanent, beefed-up health savings accounts, tort reform, and—above all—continued support for personal accounts in Social Security. Social conservatives got increased funding for abstinence education, drug testing in the schools, rhetoric against steroid abuse by athletes, and, perhaps most important, some presidential support for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. The president's remarks on this last point were somewhat vague; he did not actually call for an amendment. But he framed the issue the right way. Judges, he said, were rewriting the marriage laws and had to be stopped. A constitutional amendment might be the only way to stop them. At the same time, he made it clear that he has no intention of promoting hostility to homosexuals.

The major programmatic fault of the speech is also that of his presidency: There was too much spending. Some of Bush's spending we support—the doubling of funding for the National Endowment for Democracy. Other spending we are more skep-

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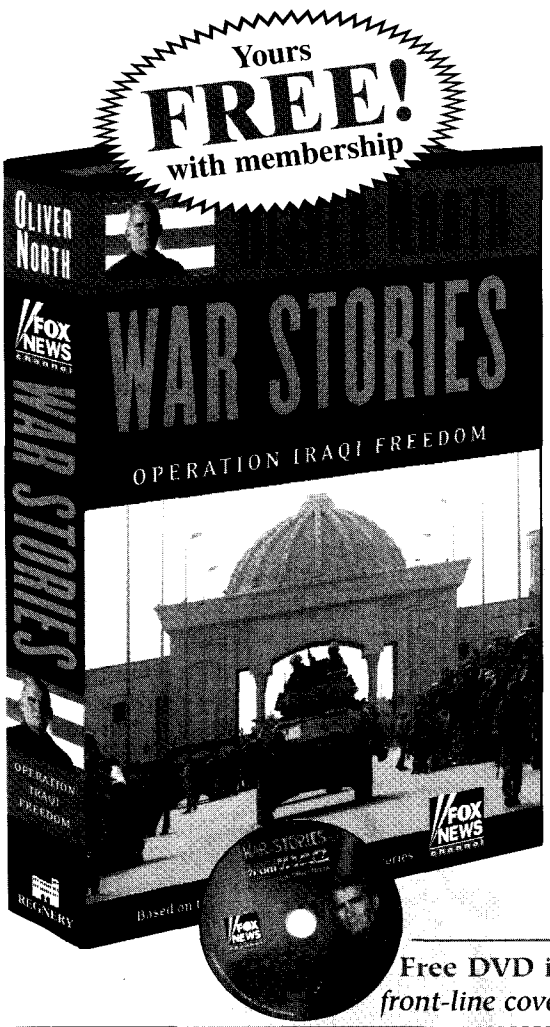
On the ground in Iraq with Oliver North



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tical about: Why should the federal government be involved in promoting condoms or abstinence? We doubt very much that new subsidies to community colleges will turn out to be money well spent. But all the new spending, good and bad, needs to be offset by spending reductions elsewhere. The president came out for no specific spending cuts. He asked only that Congress show some spending restraint and cut the deficit in half over five years—a truly lame battle cry.

We were heartened to see that congressmen kept their seats when the president discussed his immigration reforms (about which more below). But especially after watching the Democratic response by Nancy Pelosi and Tom Daschle—who more or less presented the war as a distraction from the urgent business of creating new subsidies for their constituents—we are happy to give Bush two cheers, and look forward to his giving the State of the Union address again next year.

IMMIGRATION

Temporary Insanity

PRESIDENT BUSH'S immigration proposals have been taking a beating from all sides. Restrictionists say that he is opening the borders. Liberals are complaining that he wants immigrants to be workers, but not citizens. The center-left editors of *The New Republic* are against the plan. Conservative senators such as Jon Kyl want substantial modifications. Even as pro-Bush a pundit as Fred Barnes says the plan won't work. Early polls have not been favorable.

Is there anything to be said for Bush's policy? With charity, we can come up with a few things. First, Bush has acknowledged the reality that our current policies are not working. Several million illegal immigrants already live in America, and their numbers increase by about 400,000 every year. Second: Whatever the president's other motives—the hunt for Hispanic votes, for example—the president has sought to respond to these illegal immigrants with decency and generosity. We should condemn their law-breaking, but we should also have sympathy. Most of them have come here only to find a better life.

The president's solution is to create a guest-worker program. People from other countries would be able to come and work for three-year terms. Illegal immigrants already here could join the program. Participants will be able to become citizens, but they will receive no preferential treatment compared to applicants who are waiting patiently overseas. Workers who leave their jobs, or get fired, will have to find another employer to sponsor them or risk deportation. The three-year terms would be renewable, but eventually workers would have to become permanent legal residents or leave.

Does this plan amount to an "amnesty," as the critics charge? It is certainly a partial amnesty: The government would be promising not to enforce the laws against participating illegal immigrants for at least three years. The plan also rewards law-breaking. Illegal immigrants may not have a better shot at citizenship than people who wait overseas, but they do obviously have a better shot at working in America.

The debate over amnesty, however, misses the point. Objectionable though Bush's treatment of illegal immigrants is, it is not the worst feature of his policy. His invitation to millions of new guest workers is much more troubling. How "temporary" do we really expect their status to be? Under current law, any children they have while here will be American citizens—and the Bush administration supports that law. Is the government really going to be willing to deport the parents of American children?

Tying the workers to particular companies is not compatible with free labor markets. It will undermine the workers' ability to bargain for better pay and working conditions. That cannot be good for them or for American workers.

Will there be serious background checks to make sure that temporary workers are not criminals, or even terrorists? The last amnesty covered at least one terrorist, because the immigration bureaucracy was incapable of doing due diligence. It is overworked as it is. How well will it administer a vast new guest-worker program? Will business lobbies be willing to wait as background checks are done, or will they exert pressure to get the process speeded up?

Public-opinion polls consistently find that the public does not want more immigration. It wants less. And the public has good reasons for this view. To take in millions of people, who are disproportionately poor and uneducated, is to import social problems. Some conservatives say that we should simply insist on assimilation while allowing mass immigration. But mass immigration has made it harder to sustain assimilative policies. Hispanics in California, for example, voted to keep bilingual education programs. As mass immigration has made the country more diverse culturally, even native-born Americans have found multiculturalism plausible. In any case, assimilation is not simply a matter of government policy. The more immigrants there are, the harder it will be for them to assimilate. The president, announcing his policy, pointed to the success of the great wave of immigration at the turn of the last century. But a large reason those immigrants successfully assimilated was that America took a decades-long time-out from mass immigration.

In selling its policies, the administration's trump card has been that there is no alternative: We are not going to deport the millions of illegal immigrants who are here. But that is not our only option. Mark Krikorian, the head of the Center for Immigration Studies, points out that every year, a few hundred thousand illegal immigrants leave America. A policy that increased the outflow, and reduced the inflow, would over time reduce the illegal-alien population. An increased pace of deportation, for example, would make Mexicans less likely to come here in the first place—and more likely to leave if they are already here. It is not true that we have "already tried" enforcing the immigration laws. We have states that offer reduced tuition to illegal immigrants' children, and hand them driver's licenses. We do not allow the Treasury or Social Security Administration to cooperate with immigration authorities. There is much more that could be done, and done humanely.

We need not fear that getting serious about enforcement would destroy the economy. We are often told that the economy needs illegal immigrants to do the work Americans won't do.

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But illegal immigration is concentrated in a few states. Most states have gotten by without them—and lawns still get mown, fast food still gets cooked, and gardens still get tended. Reduce legal and illegal immigration, and some prices will go up (as will some wages). But the market will adjust.

The administration, we are sad to say, has not shown much sign of having given these issues serious thought. One administration aide said, for example, that the proposals would help the economy because now illegal immigrants would pay sales taxes. Does the administration imagine that companies currently give discounts to illegal immigrants? Will Bush and his aides be willing to learn from the criticisms or to debate them in a civil manner? Margaret Spellings, a top White House aide, told an audience at the Cato Institute recently that one of the leading critics, Congressman Tom Tancredo, was "out on the far right of the spectrum on this." That doesn't sound encouraging. But the critics should not give up. By the White House's standards, the American public is "far right" too.

notes & asides

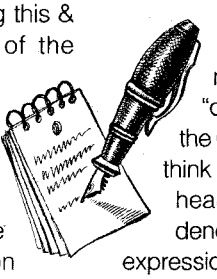
■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Herewith Abe Foxman in his new book, *Never Again*. He is speaking about "circumstances in which an American military leader . . . might be tempted to abandon our Israeli allies in a time of crisis." He goes on: "This is why I have paid such close attention to the signs of latent anti-Semitism—or of flirtation with anti-Semitism—in such prominent public figures as Pat Buchanan, Jesse Jackson, William F. Buckley Jr., and Al Sharpton. In time of personal crisis, latent attitudes become explicit, and individuals with influence and authority can do real damage if their attitudes are marred by prejudice and hatred."

Comment?

Joseph De Feo
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. De Feo: You have to understand this about Abe Foxman. It is his business to find anti-Semitism, actual or inchoate or non-existent. If anti-Semitism departed from the scene, the Anti-Defamation League would be out of business. I published a book about anti-Semitism a dozen years ago, and had from Foxman a note pertaining to my exoneration of the *Dartmouth Review*: "[Your] piece clearly reflects your well-deserved reputation for . . . intellectual honesty and will enlighten all who take the opportunity—and show the good sense—to read it." Not very long after that, the ADL gave an award to the president of Dartmouth for denouncing the *Dartmouth Review*, which, Foxman had said after reading my book, was not guilty.

The thing of it is, the ADL under Foxman (his predecessor, the late Nathan Perlmutter, was scrupulously honest, and wrote occasionally for NATIONAL REVIEW) has these days a Left agenda. I told him as much a few years ago in a letter which I published in this space. "I am pleased," I wrote, "that the ADL has recorded my very long opposition to anti-Semitism. But the ADL is about all kinds of things and you should understand the resentment some who back the basic aim of the ADL feel at being coopted, as you try to do, to such causes as: opposing English-only legislation, resisting a Colorado plebiscite that sought to prevent legislation giving gays special rights, challenging the Catholic bishop's right in Boston to specify what groups could participate in the St. Patrick's Day parade, deploring this & that involving the activities of the National Rifle Association, and applauding the end of the all-male tradition of the Virginia Military Institute."



I have an award in my trunk from the ADL, and continue to honor its anti-discrimination ideals. About a year ago *New Republic* editor Leon Wieseltier referred to me as the "most distinguished anti-anti-Semite in American Catholicism." Abe has to make a living, but he doesn't do much for anti-discrimination when he bawls out this kind of stuff.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Bill: Regarding Mr. Reith's letter (Dec. 31) about the Mass translation: The real objection should be to the omission of "sub tectum meum," which I believe may be restored in the forthcoming translation, and this is proper because the Mass phrase is an allusion to the Centurion in Matthew 8:8. As any fifth grader knows, neither Greek nor Latin has the distinction of intensifiers that English has for the future tense: shall/will. The Greek texts with which I am most familiar (the Alexandrian and the Byzantine Majority) have "iathaisetai," which can be either "shall" or "will." Of course it is in the third person, instancing the Centurion's servant. The same is true of the Latin "sanabitur." All the classical English translations do use an intensifier—"My servant shall be healed"—so logically the parallel would be "I will be healed"—although the accurate translation would use "anima" (soul), putting it in the third person. It is helpful to consult a scholar's translation into an obscure language. One thinks immediately of Father Gailland's translation of the New Testament into Potawatomi. The verse there is: "n mitenno kikìton iw ketchi nèsèt nin ochkinikim." But "ochkinikim" is as ambiguous as the Greek "iathaisetai." So I should think one is free to choose. "I will be healed" represents pious confidence and might be taken as an expression of faith. But it may also suggest a degree of subjectivity, as if the healing depended on one's enthusiasm. As our Lord praised the Centurion's pragmatism, there is equal justification for saying "I shall be healed" as a matter-of-fact description of objective grace.

Rev. George W. Rutler
New York, N.Y.

Dear Father Rutler: Ixnay capisco!
Thanks,

—WFB

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■ ELECTION 2004 ■

Stark Raving Clark

The general is all-American, and all pander

RICHARD LOWRY

Concord, N.H.

It might be the very peak of the Clark boomlet in early January. The lobby of Concord High School is packed with 700 people, almost to the rafters. Kids are sitting atop soda and concession machines in the back to get a better view. Clark is halfway through his question-and-answer period when a man stands up and explains how he had been struck speechless—speechless—upon meeting Clark a few months earlier. He says that he has since realized that his tongue-tiedness had been a product of his sheer awe at the fact that Clark is such "a humble, down-to-earth man. You're what we need in this country." The crowd cheers. The man tells Clark that to make up for his earlier reticence he has made him a present, a framed picture of Clark with his family so he can better remember them while away campaigning.

He begins walking toward Clark to give him the picture. Something seems off. Maybe it's a canny heckler pulling Clark's leg? Or maybe something worse? One reporter says afterward she thought that maybe the man was going to pull out a gun and shoot Clark. It turned out to be none of the above—he was just a weirdly devoted Clark fan.

A strangeness adheres to the Clark campaign, which is an admixture of old-fashioned patriotism and rank opportunism and paranoid anti-Bush raving. If Clark fails to withstand the John Kerry and John Edwards surges coming out of Iowa (as seems likely), American politics will be better for it. Clark represents the antiwar lunacy of Howard Dean without any of the conviction (although it's debatable how much of his own shtick Dean believes). Nonetheless, amidst all that is off-key and noxious in the Clark effort, there is something winsome and all-American too.

His campaign video, "American Son," is practically pornography for patriots. Watching it is enough to make you think that not only should Clark become president, he should ascend bodily to heaven. Puppy-dog-holding kid. Champion swimmer. Honor student. West Point standout. (Are you feeling unworthy yet?) Husband of beautiful wife. War hero in Vietnam. Friend of children and minorities while in the military. Savior of the Kosovars. Medal of Freedom winner. And, of course, presidential candidate seeking to restore the honor of his nation. The only problem is that the video is so perfect it is almost self-parodic. At the beginning, Clark is shown speaking in a military uniform so festooned with medals and ribbons it's a wonder he could stand up straight. But it's no mystery why shrewd politicos thought the person of Wes Clark would make an excellent foundation for a presidential campaign.

He wouldn't have been such an attractive vessel if there weren't a reservoir of patriotic feeling and regard for the military even among Democratic primary voters. Clark often asks veterans in the audience to stand and be acknowledged—something John McCain used to do too. When Clark talks about, as a kid, going into his friends' attics to look at their fathers' medals, or cracking open shotgun shells to get gunpowder to try to build a rocket in his backyard after the Soviets launched Sputnik, it's a wonderful evocation of dutiful American boyhood. He can bring almost any policy question back to his experiences in the military, and his military references are almost always well-received. Asked about the national shortage of nurses at a health-care forum, Clark recalls his experience with the nurses in an army hospital after being shot in Vietnam. They were nurturing, but not just that: "They made me sit up straight in bed—these were *army* nurses." The audience laughs.

Talking about the military comes naturally to Clark. His retail politicking is more forced. At an L.L.Bean store, shopping for a sweater, Clark pounces on any stray shopper he can find. He grabs one woman's hand and won't let go, while cameras and reporters gather around. She looks shocked and uncomfortable,

BRIAN SNYDER/REUTERS

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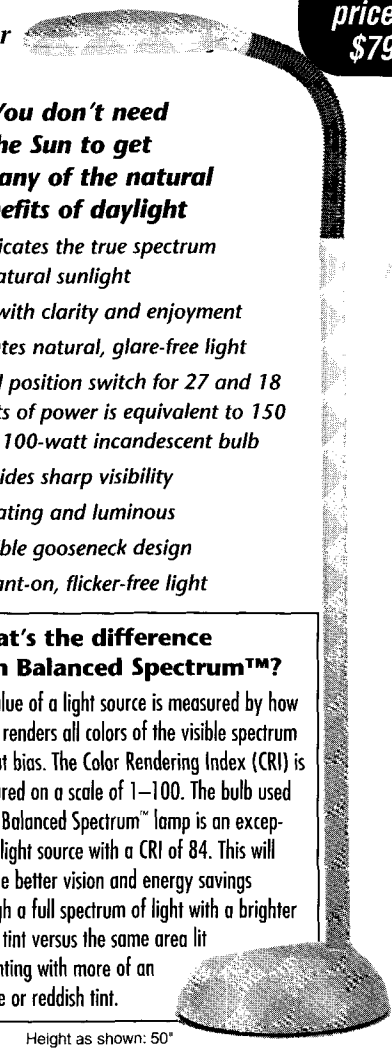
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relieved when Clark finally moves on. "Is this the line for returns?" she asks no one in particular. Then, Clark jumps to a woman with a baby, asking "Have you ever seen a really cute baby picture?" He theatrically kisses the baby on both cheeks, claps his hands and exclaims, "How's that? Not bad, right?"

Clark strains hard to achieve a regular-guy bonhomie, so hard that often he is goofy or downright weird. When he is too small to fit in an extra-large forest green sweater he takes into the changing room with him at L.L.Bean, he offers it to a young woman following him from one of the networks. "You really want me to wear a large *man's* green sweater?" she asks, puzzled or maybe a little offended. Later that night, reporters guffaw and shake their heads when Clark invites them on his daily swim the next morning, but stipulates that if there are cameras there, there can be "no shots beneath the waist. No beefcake."

Clark is sharp, and has learned his lines well. After a health-care speech at a hospital in Hanover, he effectively parries questions from doctors and medical professors for more than twenty minutes. It's impressive, but you get the sense that his knowledge—and, more important, his conviction—is an inch deep. Ask him about Medicaid reimbursements to the states, and he'll spit out a brief, perfect piece of wonkery. Ask him why he's a Democrat given that he voted for Nixon, Ford, and Reagan—which someone asks him at almost every stop—and he sounds prickly, defensive, and unconvincing.

When someone asks him the question at a town-hall meeting, he says, apparently suggesting the questioner must be an agent of an enemy campaign, "I could ask you why you are asking that question." At another event, asked by a woman if he is a Republican "in sheep's clothing," he looks very awkward before shooting back, "I don't think Democrats are sheep." His quick-witted rejoinder gets applause, but he didn't answer the question. What he usually says is that he voted Republican because the country needed to be protected during the Cold War (uh, and now it doesn't?).

Clark already has a politician's habit of over-promising. Routinely on the stump he promises to: "raise family income $3,000 a year in my four-year term"; "save 100,000 people in this country from premature death"; add "a million additional kids in college in four years"; "raise two million children above the poverty level"; "guarantee health insurance for every child in America and universal access to health care." In addition he will catch Osama bin Laden, prevent any more terrorist attacks, and create "a new agency of government to help foreign governments prevent crises." He loves the word "promise." He tells one questioner he will fix the nursing shortage in the U.S.—"I promise you we will do that." As for the Mideast, he says, "I will be there. I'll have my representatives there. And we will bring peace between Israelis and Palestinians. And that's a promise."

Because Clark seems to have little in the way of conviction, he is a natural panderer. In today's Democratic party, especially when you have been chasing the ex-frontrunner Howard Dean, that often means pandering to its worst instincts. This tendency, coupled with the newcomer Clark's political tin ear, has led to his regularly making outrageous charges (see Jay Nordlinger's "A General's Campaign," NR, Jan. 26). I heard him call Bush unpatriotic; suggest that Bush never had any real interest in capturing bin Laden; say that Bush has "the record of a reckless and heartless leader"; and argue that only the Democratic party is true to Christian principles. And all of this was before Michael Moore showed up to endorse him a week or so later, when Clark gave credence to the idea that Bush was "a deserter" during his National Guard service.

When Howard Dean still seemed unstoppable, there appeared to be a premium on this sort of rhetoric. But the Iowa vote boosting Kerry and Edwards was, among other things, an anti-flakiness vote. Clark has identified himself with the flakiness of the Left in this political season in a way that may well—and should—cost him. He did this not because he is a wild-eyed left-winger at heart, but because he is so ambitious. Clark's super-charged ambition is what created resentment toward him at the Pentagon and prematurely ended his military career in 1999. It could do the same to his political career. And there is no time for prematurely ending it quite like the present. **NR**

■ **ELECTION 2004 II**

A Cause Endures

Gephardt is out. Is protectionism in?

DANIEL T. GRISWOLD

RICHARD GEPHARDT's quest for the Democratic presidential nomination is over, and so, apparently, is his political career. But one key element of his message continues to reverberate within his party.

While Howard Dean tapped the antiwar sentiment among Democrats, Gephardt tried to mine resentment against international trade. In his stump speeches, he blamed trade for most of America's perceived and real economic ills. He hammered home the fact that, in contrast to his rivals, he opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) bill that ushered China into the World Trade Organization. It's a message that, at least before the Iowa caucuses on January 19, seemed to resonate with many blue-collar union members.

No one could accuse Dick Gephardt of an eleventh-hour conversion to the protectionist gospel. The 14-term Missouri congressman has been preaching and practicing it for years. Back in the 1980s, he championed an amendment that would have imposed sanctions on countries that ran bilateral trade surpluses with the U.S. He not only opposed but led the charge in the House against NAFTA, PNTR with China, and trade-promotion authority (a.k.a. "fast track").

Gephardt wrapped his pronouncements against trade in near-apocalyptic language. The U.S. trade deficit "is both an American crisis and a global tragedy."

Mr. Griswold is associate director of the Center for Trade Policy Studies at the Cato Institute.

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U.S. multinational companies are aiding and abetting a global "race to the bottom" in which they "have thrown morality to the winds and sought out those countries where exploitation knows no bounds."

While his own bid failed, the former House Democratic leader won converts among his rivals. He justifiably bragged that the other candidates were sounding more like Dick Gephardt with each passing debate. Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts voted for NAFTA, China PNTR, and trade-promotion authority, but he has now pledged to veto agreements that do not enforce strict labor and environmental standards on less developed countries (a poison pill that would preclude any new agreements). Howard Dean backed NAFTA when he was governor of Vermont, but now says he wants to renegotiate the deal to toughen standards. Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina, who has a mixed voting record, has sounded harsher in his criticisms of free trade. Wesley Clark, a blank slate on trade, has adopted the tougher-standards mantra. Only Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut has defended the free-trade tradition, warning his fellow Democrats that protectionism would harm the U.S. economy and cost jobs in export-oriented farm states such as Iowa.

Gephardt chided his rivals for supporting "a trade policy that's exactly like George Bush's," skipping over the irony that what he really opposed were Bill Clinton's trade policies. After all, NAFTA and China PNTR, the two main targets of Gephardt's fire, were pushed through Congress by President Clinton. While Clinton had his lapses from free trade (as has his successor), he championed it rhetorically and delivered some genuine victories. Gephardt and the rest of the protectionist pack seem to have forgotten the pro-trade element in the centrist platform of the only Democrat to win two terms in office since Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In supporting trade, it is Bill Clinton and Joe Lieberman who represent "the Democratic wing of the Democratic party." In the days of FDR and John F. Kennedy, Democrats were the ones who understood that trade keeps prices down for working families by keeping competitive pressure up on domestic producers. It was Democrats such as Secretary of State Cordell Hull who turned our nation away from the disastrous protectionist policies of the 1930s and embraced trade as a tool of foreign policy. In the aftermath of World War II, trade spread hope to war-torn Europe and Japan, helped knit together a peaceful Western Europe, and helped cement the Cold War alliance.

Today, trade remains our best hope for spreading prosperity to a wider circle of mankind. Trade promotes growth in developing countries, reducing poverty and raising labor and environmental standards. Contrary to Gephardt's "exploitation" charge, U.S. multinationals prefer to invest in countries where the infrastructure works, markets are open, and workers are educated and able to buy the products they make. That's why most outward U.S. direct investment flows to Canada and Western Europe, and only a trickle to India, Haiti, and sub-Saharan Africa. Developing countries that open themselves to trade are also more likely to open their political systems and protect human rights.

At home, trade raises the productivity of American workers and lowers prices at the store, allowing working families to enjoy a higher standard of living. The economic boom of the 1990s that the Democrats claim they want to replicate was also a period of rising trade, including imports, and growing U.S. integration into the global economy. NAFTA and the Uruguay Round Agreements that created the WTO helped to spur the rise in U.S. productivity that fueled the low-inflation expansion.

Another irony for the anti-trade Democrats is that America's remaining trade barriers are cruelly if unintentionally aimed at products disproportionately made and consumed by poor people. Those U.S. trade barriers the Democrats want to spare from future trade agreements aren't aimed typically at products made in other rich countries but at those made and grown in the world's poorest countries. And those same products—food, clothing, textiles, shoes—represent a big chunk of the budgets of poorer families here at home. Recent studies by the pro-trade Progressive Policy Institute, the New Democrat think tank, found that a poor, single mother of two pays an effective tariff rate on the goods she buys that is three times higher than the rate paid by a single executive earning $110,000 a year. American protectionism as it exists today is a steeply regressive tax.

The one apparent chink in Gephardt's anti-trade armor has been his support for the World Trade Organization. Gephardt voted in favor of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act in 1994, and against a failed resolution in 2000 to withdraw the

DARREN GYGI

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U.S. from the organization. But it now appears he literally did not know what he was voting for.

In an interview in November, Gephardt promised, "When I am president I will ask the WTO to enact an international minimum wage." This proposal is astonishing on at least three counts. First, the WTO itself has zero authority to "enact" anything, never mind a sweeping global minimum wage. It is a membership-driven organization that can enact no new policy without the unanimous agreement of its 148 members, and those agreements are "enforced" only when one member decides to challenge another through dispute settlement. Second, the 80 percent of WTO members that are developing countries would summarily and rightly reject anything smacking of an intrusive "international minimum wage." Like environmental and labor standards, it's a non-starter. Third, the idea would be a recipe for global disaster. Workers in poor countries receive lower wages for a very basic reason: They are less productive. The reason is not that they are incapable or lazy, but that they lack the education, infrastructure, capital, and efficient domestic markets to match rich-country levels of productivity. If companies are forced by law to pay them an hourly wage higher than the value of what they can produce in an hour, no company will hire them. The result would be massive unemployment in poor countries, collapsing demand, and social chaos.

Richard Gephardt's campaign for the presidency ended in Iowa, but will his legacy live on in the Democratic party? If the eventual nominee still sounds like Gephardt on trade, it is unlikely to give him much traction in the general election. For one thing, the steadily improving U.S. economy reduces the value of trade as a bogeyman. For another, protectionism has not sold well on the presidential level since Herbert Hoover's campaign in 1928. Americans may have their misgivings about trade, but it ranks far down their list of issues. Americans expect members of Congress to represent parochial interests, but they also want their presidents to safeguard our broader national interest. **NR**

ROMAN GENN

■ **ELECTION 2004 III**

The Pure One

Dennis Kucinich, 'soul-light magic,' and the Democratic party

BYRON YORK

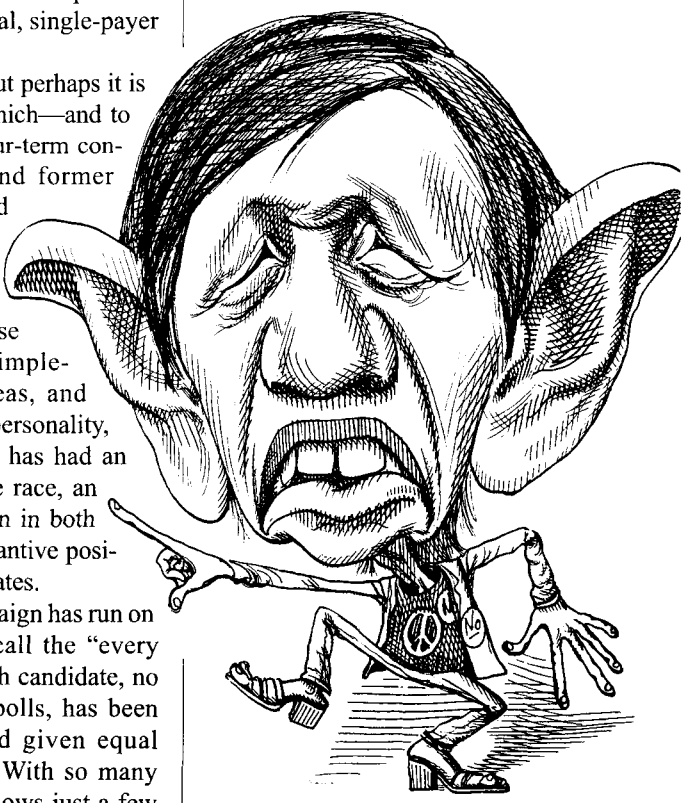
It's easy—and not altogether unfair—to dismiss Rep. Dennis Kucinich as a kook. What other Democratic presidential candidate has mused publicly on the nature of the universe by saying, as Kucinich did in June 2002, "The interchangeability of matter and spirit means the starlit magic of the outermost life of our universe becomes the soul-light magic of the innermost life of our self"? And who else has described his perfect soul mate, as the unmarried Kucinich did in November, as a woman who is "fearless in her desire for peace in the world and for universal, single-payer health care"?

It's good for a laugh, but perhaps it is *too* easy to dismiss Kucinich—and to miss the influence the four-term congressman from Ohio and former "boy mayor" of Cleveland has had on the Democratic race. Because of the structure of the multi-candidate contest, because of the simplicity—or simple-mindedness—of his ideas, and because of his scrappy personality, the diminutive Kucinich has had an outsized influence on the race, an influence that can be seen in both the rhetoric and the substantive positions of his fellow candidates.

Up until now, the campaign has run on what some Democrats call the "every man a king" system. Each candidate, no matter how low in the polls, has been dutifully included—and given equal time—in party debates. With so many candidates, the format allows just a few precious moments for each to make his points. With so little time, the candidates with the best sound bites tend to receive a disproportionate amount of attention.

That's where Kucinich comes in. He can describe his entire platform in ten seconds: He wants the U.S. out of Iraq immediately. He wants to repeal NAFTA. He wants universal health insurance. His program excites the far-left reaches of the generally leftist Democratic base, even if some of those voters realize Kucinich himself doesn't stand a chance. "He is giving party activists the pure essence of what they want to hear on every conceivable subject," says one Democrat frustrated by the attention Kucinich receives at debates. "How hard is it to say that all trade is terrible, that Bush conducted a war to pay off his friends?"

It is, in fact, very easy to say those things, and Kucinich does it every chance he gets. And that, in turn, has put pressure on the other candidates. "He's pulled the debate to the left," says Republican pollster David Winston, who works with the GOP in Congress and keeps in touch with the White House this election year. "He's having an influence, and ultimately that will not be helpful for



Rep. Dennis Kucinich

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the Democrats." Even if you view Kucinich's presence as a good thing for Democrats—Donna Brazile, who ran Al Gore's 2000 presidential campaign, says Kucinich has "really hit a chord with a lot of lefties out there" and has energized "a part of the party that has not been talked to"—he's still nudging them further left than they might otherwise want to go.

The leftward pressure pushes other candidates to bend their own positions to fit the left-wing activists' expectations. How else can one account for otherwise rational men who try to explain that they originally supported the idea of the war in Iraq, and then they didn't support the prosecution of the war, and then they supported the reconstruction of Iraq, and then they didn't support paying $87 billion for it? While the other candidates twist themselves into pretzels, Kucinich looks straight ahead. "That put him in a great position to say, 'If that's all a bad idea, then let's just get out [of Iraq],'" says the frustrated Democrat. "It's the simplicity of the demagogue and the ideologue."

For his admirers, Kucinich has the bona fides to back up his rants. For one thing, he was the only member of Congress in the race to vote against the war, something that has made it necessary for some of the candidates to pay a kind of backhanded homage to him. At a debate in Iowa on January 11, when Howard Dean began to slam his opponents for failing to "stand up" to George W. Bush over the war, he said, "I stood up when nobody else was willing to stand up, except for Dennis Kucinich."

Kucinich is nudging Democrats further left than they might otherwise want to go.

Kucinich also voted against the Patriot Act, which all of the other members of Congress in the race supported. They've embarrassed themselves trying to nuance that one, too, while Kucinich simply condemns the whole thing. And then there's trade: Kucinich has said that his first act as president would be to repeal NAFTA and the World Trade Organization. Other candidates (besides Richard Gephardt, who has long opposed the trade deal) felt the pull, so much so that the moderate Democratic Leadership Council accused Dean, at one time a strong supporter of NAFTA, of adopting a "Kucinich-Lite position that repudiates the Clinton legacy of trade expansion."

There have been times during the debates when Kucinich, and not the nominal front-runners, set the terms of the conversation. At the youth-oriented "Rock the Vote" debate, held last November in Boston, Kucinich launched into his standard rap about how the United States should get out of Iraq and let the United Nations handle everything in the country, including its oil industry. "No more Halliburton sweetheart deals," Kucinich chanted.

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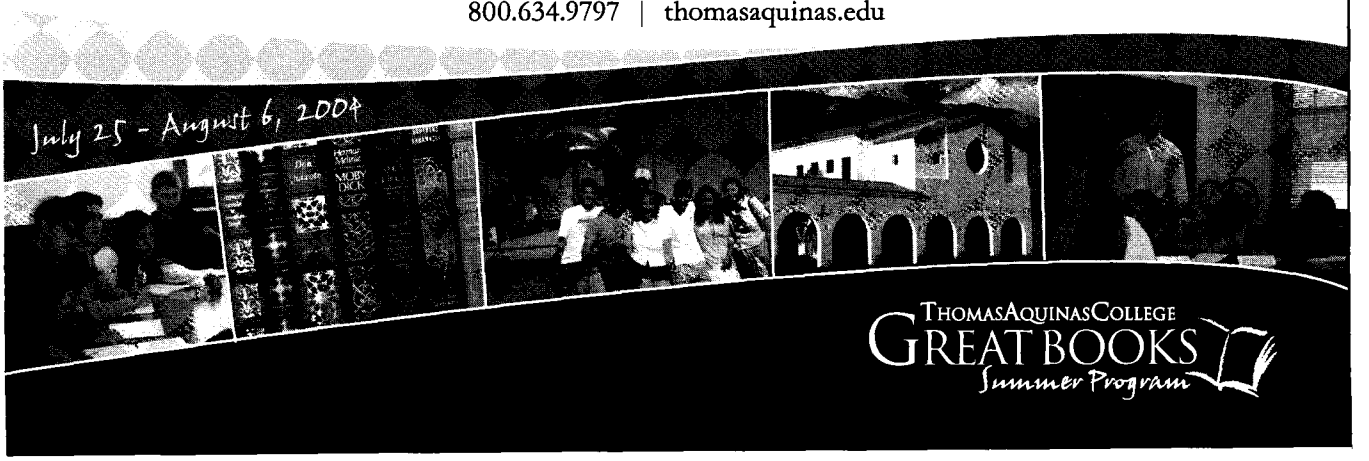

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The other candidates had heard him say the same thing, in the same words, dozens of times. But the crowd in Faneuil Hall loved it and began to applaud. At that point, a light bulb seemed to go on over the heads of some of the others on stage.

First, Al Sharpton condemned "sweetheart deals going with Halliburton." Then Carol Moseley Braun denounced "sweetheart deals for Halliburton." Finally John Edwards said, "As some of my colleagues up here have mentioned, [we have to] put a stop to these sweetheart deals for Halliburton." Kucinich had pointed the way, and the rest followed.

At another debate in December, this one in New Hampshire, Kucinich found himself under attack from the moderator, Ted Koppel of ABC News, for staying in the race with almost no support in the polls. "When do you pull out?" Koppel asked. "When I take the oath of office," Kucinich answered, going on to lecture Koppel for "trivializ[ing]" the issues by paying too much attention to money, endorsements, and polls. The crowd applauded loudly.

This time, it was John Kerry who was emboldened to follow Kucinich. When the questioning got to the Massachusetts senator, Kerry picked up on Kucinich's line and told Koppel, "If I were an impolite person, I'd tell you where you could take your polls."

Such performances have earned Kucinich a solid backing, even if he remains an also-ran. And he has raised enough money to keep going for a while, if he wants. Kucinich collected about $5.1 million in 2003, which will soon make him eligible for about $4 million in federal matching funds. That can go a long way with his bare-bones operation.

But as actual voters actually cast votes, things will become progressively harder for Kucinich. He will likely be excluded from debates on the basis of his low numbers, and he will find it more difficult to keep raising money. Will he give up? He says no, but of course he will, at some point. Nevertheless, in a Democratic race in which candidates virtually ran over one another in the rush to the left, he has already made his presence felt. **NR**

■ **IMMIGRATION**

Making It Worse

President Bush has tackled the immigration problem—wrongly

GEORGE J. BORJAS

THE Bush administration has revealed the broad outline of its immigration-reform plan. It has three key components. First, it legalizes the approximately 10 million illegal aliens now present in the U.S. by creating a new type of temporary-worker visa. This visa would have a term of three years and would be renewable an unspecified number of times. Second, these visas would be available to persons now living abroad who have been offered employment by an American employer. As the White House puts it, the plan would "match willing foreign workers with willing U.S. employers when no Americans can be found to fill the jobs." The implication is clear: Many American workers in many different industries will face direct competition from foreign workers. And third, the program would give temporary workers a path to permanent immigration by allowing them to apply for a green card. To take care of the backlog that will inevitably arise as millions of applications pour in, the president proposes an unspecified increase in the number of employment-based green cards that are granted each year.

Although the plan's details remain sketchy, it is not too early to make a summary judgment about its conceptual underpinnings. In its ambition, in its misguided approach to social policy, and in the huge consequences it forebodes, the package bears more than a passing resemblance to Hillary Clinton's ill-fated health-care proposal. The new bureaucrats in town must have worked equally long hours trying to fuse a lot of bad ideas into an incoherent policy.

The proposal begins on a realistic note: Something must be done about the millions of illegal aliens already here. But problems crop up as soon as the president begins to fill in the details. The Bush plan makes the fatal mistake of providing a form of amnesty to the existing illegal-alien population without addressing the problem of how to curtail future illegal immigration. It makes no sense to consider what should be done about the existing 10 million illegal aliens until we can reasonably ensure that we will not have to revisit the issue in a few years, when another 10 million have come in.

We've been here before: The 1986 immigration bill gave amnesty to what was then considered to be a very large number of illegal aliens (around 3 million!) in exchange for the establishment of an employer-sanction program that would cut off the demand for illegal workers by American firms. The employer-sanction program had many loopholes and was not enforced seriously, leading to our current situation.

Bush's proposal will probably encourage much more illegal immigration. There is a huge demand for entry into the U.S. Millions apply for the 50,000 visas that we raffle out annually in the "diversity lottery" program. How many of these millions will now view the guest-worker program as their ticket into the country? How many of these "temporary" visitors, once their visas expire, will ever leave?

It has been said that the Bush proposal rewards illegal behavior, but this is not the whole truth. The Bush proposal does not reward persons who commit only the crime of entering the country illegally; it rewards persons who compound that crime by committing others. The illegal alien must be working to qualify for a temporary-worker visa, implying that he must have purchased fake documents. He must have given the employer a false Social Security num-

Mr. Borjas is a professor of economics and social policy at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. His latest book on immigration issues is *Heaven's Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy* (Princeton).

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ber. The employer, who probably knows precisely what is going on, breaks the law by knowingly hiring the illegal alien. And what is the end result of all this illicit activity? A fast-track opportunity for a green card. Compare this path to the one that many law-abiding immigrants have taken: The State Department is only now processing the visa applications of Filipinos who were sponsored by their siblings 23 years ago!

Let me give one specific example of how half-baked the proposal seems to be. We now grant 140,000 employment-based green cards annually (almost all of the other green cards are given to family members of U.S. residents or citizens). Suppose that the administration eventually proposes to expand the quota by more than tripling the number of employment-based green cards, to 450,000 per year. It would still take 32 years (!) for the extra visas to handle the 10 million illegals now here, even if nobody else comes in under the new program.

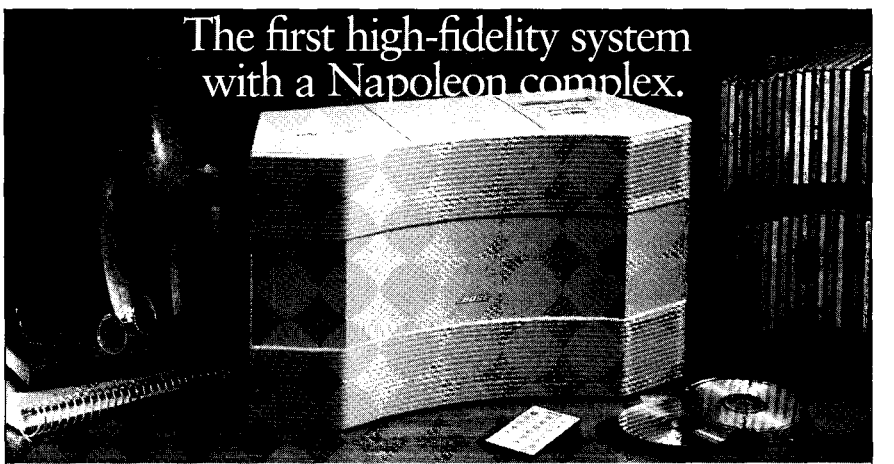
But doesn't the U.S. need illegal aliens to keep many of its industries running? And don't illegal aliens do jobs that natives do not want to do? These questions perpetuate some of the most persistent myths of immigration. Supporters of a guest-worker program claim that entire industries would vanish if American employers did not have access to cheap foreign labor. The vast majority (82 percent) of cab drivers in New York City are foreign-born: Would all those yellow cars be piled up in some junkyard if those immigrants had not been admitted? Of course not. In Cincinnati and Detroit, fewer than 10 percent of the cab drivers are foreign-born, and the taxi industry survives in those cities. It may cost a little more to ride in those cabs, but the job gets done. Similarly, most gardeners in southern California are Mexican immigrants, and many of them are illegal aliens. Yet one can travel to many parts of the country where illegal Mexican immigration is rare and, not surprisingly, see green and neatly mowed lawns.

Moreover, people adapt to changing circumstances. The huge supply of low-wage illegal aliens encourages American farmers to lag technologically behind farmers in other countries. Raisin production in California still requires that grapes be cut off by hand and manually turned on the drying tray. In other countries, farmers use a labor-saving technique called "drying on the vine." A cutoff of the illegal-alien flow would encourage American farmers to adopt many of these technological innovations, and come up with new ones.

What illegal immigration has done is depress wages and increase the profits of the firms that employ the immigrants.

What illegal immigration has done—and what the new program would do—is depress wages and increase the profits of the firms that employ the immigrants. According to the latest research, a 10 percent increase in the number of workers reduces a worker's wage by 3 or 4 percent. Over the past 20 years, immigration (much of it illegal) increased the number of workers without a high-school diploma by 16 percent, implying a 6 percent decline in the wage of low-skilled workers. The typical high-school dropout earns $21,000 annually. Immigration lowers this worker's salary by around $1,300. The large-scale temporary-worker program proposed by the Bush administration would expose millions more Americans to this competition, leading to even larger earnings losses and an even greater redistribution of wealth from workers to those who buy and use immigrant services.

The Bush proposal also ignores the fiscal consequences of letting an influx of temporary workers make use of the social-welfare system. In California, for example, an important part of the huge budget deficit is traceable to a problem that few politicians dare mention: the cost of supporting the state's large illegal-immigrant population. The last detailed calculations of this cost were



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conducted in the mid 1990s. The conclusion of studies conducted by Gov. Pete Wilson's Office of Planning and Research and the (pro-immigration) Urban Institute was that illegal immigrants created a net burden for California's taxpayers of around $2 to $3 billion annually. Supporters of the Bush proposal will claim that illegal aliens and guest workers do not qualify for welfare. But the illegal aliens and guest workers are not just workers, they are people too: They will get sick, have children (who, incidentally, are American citizens), and experience financial difficulties. And who exactly will pay for these health and schooling expenses?

The Bush administration keeps repeating the mantra that a) this is not an amnesty and b) it is only a temporary-worker program—implying, I suppose, that it will not increase permanent immigration all that much. At best, this is wishful thinking. A key objective of the Bush proposal is to legalize the 10 million illegals currently here. One can call the program whatever one wants, but the end result is a green card in the mail. Moreover, as the experience of guest-worker programs in other countries suggests, there is nothing more permanent than a guest worker. Many of the guest workers will surely figure out a way—even if it is by becoming an illegal alien—of staying in the United States once their visas expire. The Bush proposal will also increase legal family-based immigration, perhaps by a substantial amount. Once the newly legalized illegal aliens and guest workers get their green cards and become citizens, new entitlements kick in: They can sponsor the entry of their close and not-so-close relatives. They will sponsor the entry of their brothers and sisters, who, in turn, can sponsor the entry of their spouses, who can sponsor the entry of their siblings, and so on.

The Bush proposal takes immigration policy in precisely the wrong direction. When you're in a hole, stop digging: Only when we have dramatically reduced the number of incoming illegal immigrants should we consider proposals—like the administration's—to change the status of the illegals already here. **NR**

■ **THE AMERICAS**

Like a Good Neighbor?

Mexico and its refusal to extradite

KATE O'BEIRNE

On April 29, 2002, during a routine traffic stop, Los Angeles County deputy sheriff David March was shot in the chest, then in the head at point-blank range by an illegal alien named Armando Garcia. Within 24 hours March's killer was in his native Mexico, where he remains at liberty, beyond the reach of American justice. Garcia had been deported to his home country three times, and at the time of March's murder was wanted for two unrelated attempted homicides in California. As March's widow, Teri, says, "Armando Garcia should have been serving jail time the day my husband was killed." It is likely that Garcia will never be put behind bars, because Mexican government policy prevents the extradition of the most violent fugitives to face trial and punishment in the United States.

California prosecutors estimate that as many as 360 individuals who have committed murder or other serious crimes in the state have not been extradited. An estimated 60 fugitives charged with or wanted for murder in Los Angeles County are believed to be at large in Mexico. But California is not unique in this regard. Fugitives from Georgia justice who have fled to Mexico prompted Rep. Nathan Deal (R., Ga.) to declare that "Mexico's refusal to be a good neighbor in the prosecution of dangerous felons should be the first reason for the United States to resist expanded immigration rules and an open-border policy. Any country that refuses to extradite a criminal who executes a police officer in the performance of his duties on American soil does not deserve to be given favorable trading status or any other position of preference in its dealings with the United States."

An estimated 60 fugitives charged with or wanted for murder in Los Angeles County are believed to be at large in Mexico.

Since 1980, a treaty between the United States and Mexico has permitted either country to refuse to extradite citizens in the absence of assurances that the death penalty will not be imposed. Until two years ago, American prosecutors frequently agreed not to seek the death penalty in order to have fugitives returned to their jurisdictions. In October 2001, the Mexican Supreme Court ruled that life imprisonment violates the country's constitution, and Mexico now interprets its treaty obligations in light of that decision. It is no longer sufficient for a prosecutor to waive the death penalty; now assurances of a determinate sentence must be given. The United States, on the other hand, imposes no restrictions on the extradition and prosecution of suspects who have committed serious crimes in Mexico and flee north across the border.

Currently, prosecutors must try to win extradition by charging a fugitive with a lesser offense that doesn't match the seriousness of the crime. If extradition is denied officially, Mexico will prosecute a fugitive under its own laws, which frequently results in modest penalties. The Los Angeles district attorney's office cites murder cases in Mexico with sentences as short as three years. Once a defendant is tried and sentenced in Mexico, American law doesn't permit a retrial for the same offense. The Los Angeles County district attorney hasn't filed a formal extradition request for Armando Garcia in order to avoid a denial and ensuing

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Mexican trial. The case remains a Mexican standoff.

In a protest letter to Attorney General John Ashcroft, signed by 58 state prosecutors, the California District Attorneys Association explained that over 40 different crimes in California are punishable by "life" sentences, and neither a judge nor a prosecutor is empowered to give assurances about the possibility of parole. "The policy of the Mexican government sends a powerful message that a person can commit a heinous crime in California and escape justice for the price of a bus ticket across the border," the district attorneys concluded.

But not all murderers enjoy Mexican sanctuary equally. Last November 15, another California police officer, Matthew Pavelka, was killed during a traffic stop in Burbank, and his killer also made it across the Mexican border within 24 hours. Two weeks later, the fugitive David Garcia was expelled from Mexico. He is an American citizen. But Mexico still refuses to deport another American citizen, Alvaro Luna Jara, who has been charged with the murder of a twelve-year-old in a drive-by shooting and the attempted murder of three others. Because Jara's parents are Mexican nationals, Mexico refused to deport him on the grounds of "nationality." In testimony before a Committee on Government Reform subcommittee last fall, James P. Fox, the district attorney of San Mateo County, reported that Alvaro Jara fled to a remote area of Mexico, where he continues the family's drug trade. His brother Oscar, who committed a similar murder, has joined Alvaro in Mexico.

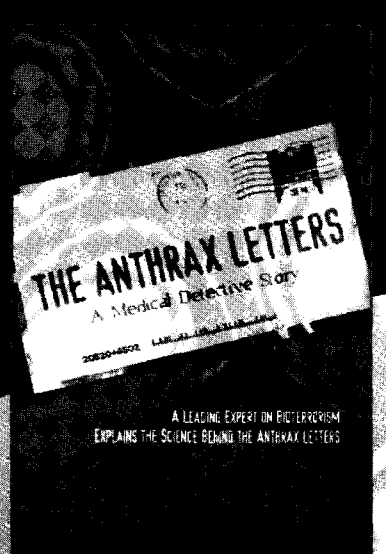
California's Sen. Dianne Feinstein cited the Jara case in a plea to Mexican president Vicente Fox last year as she sought his assistance in bringing fugitives to justice. She pointed out that individuals who flee to Mexico have a perverse incentive to kill during the commission of a crime because they would face extradition for a less serious offense. After pointing out that California law doesn't allow prosecutors or judges to set determinate sentences for "life" offenses, she argued that it is unclear whether any such assurance would even satisfy Mexican courts. She cited a Mexican court's determination that a 20-year sentence in a major federal narcotics-trafficking case was "cruel and unusual," and thus unconstitutional. Feinstein has introduced a Senate resolution calling on President Bush to either renegotiate the extradition treaty with Mexico, or take other action to ensure that violent criminals who flee to Mexico face American justice. A similar resolution passed the House last year.

Teri March never thought her fight for simple justice would take this long.

Another California Democrat, Rep. Adam Schiff, a former U.S. attorney whose district includes Deputy March's station, explains that despite overwhelming opposition in Congress to Mexico's policy, there is no legislative solution for the current situation. He believes that the issue won't be a priority with the Mexican government until it's raised at the proverbial "highest levels," and he hasn't seen any sign that it has been "the subject of forceful public diplomacy."

Last spring, Teri March personally raised the sanctuary her husband's killer enjoys at the highest possible level. At a ceremony in Washington honoring slain police officers, Teri talked briefly with President Bush about Armando Garcia's sanctuary in Mexico. "We need to get him back," the president told her. Even though Teri March hasn't heard a word about the administration's efforts to bring her husband's killer to justice since then, she maintains, "I have a hopeful heart. I think [the president is] a good man." In the meantime, she ruefully notes that she has been nominated by her town for "newsmaker of the year," in recognition of her efforts to reform Mexico's extradition policy. She never thought her fight for simple justice would take this long. **NR**

"**[The Anthrax Letters]** offers us a wealth of detail on the case—even as it reminds us how little we know."
—James P. Pinkerton in *Newsday*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■ COVER STORY

investor class, INVESTOR NATION

America is becoming an 'ownership society,' a seismic development

RAMESH PONNURU

It was not hard to find, during our recent bear market, a certain schadenfreude abroad in the land. We had been warned that the previous boom was fated to end; that the boom was, indeed, an illusion, a bubble that would burst any day now; and that all the people who had put their money in the markets without a care would discover to their horror that they could go down as well as up, and pull out their money. When the market started to fall, everyone who had been a bear amid the bulls felt entitled to say: I told you so. Such people should not be begrudged what joy they are capable of experiencing.

Sometimes, the recriminations took on a more ideological cast. Liberals ridiculed free-market enthusiasts for having suggested that individuals should be free to put some of their Social Security money in the markets. They had supposedly made this suggestion based on the naïve belief that the Dow would rise, without interruption, to 36,000 and beyond.

Also dismissed was the notion that the 1990s had seen an expansion of capital ownership that had shifted American politics to the right and would continue to do so. Nobody could deny that a change had occurred. The number of Americans who owned stock, either directly or through a pension plan, had increased from a fifth of households in the early 1980s to over half of them by the end of the 1990s. Richard Nadler, a conservative activist, called the new stockowners "worker-capitalists." The conservative economist Lawrence Kudlow gave them the more felicitous label "the new investor class."

By the end of the Clinton administration, most Republican politicians were happy to regard the investor class as a force that would work to their inevitable benefit. Few of them considered the matter more deeply or gave any thought to how to expand the investor class or make it more Republican. The media were interested by the idea of the investor class, although there was some healthy skepticism.

The bear market and the corporate-accounting scandals changed the conventional wisdom about the investor class. Now there was no such thing—or there was, and it was a voting bloc that favored more government regulation. "Instead of embracing conservative ideology, voter-investors are somewhere between jittery and angry," reporter Richard Stevenson wrote in the *New York Times* in August 2002, adding that "their reaction threatens to be bad news for Republicans on the ballot this November as well as for President Bush." The same summer, the respected political journalist Ronald Brownstein wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* that "investors have become a force for more government regulation of the markets." Regulation was necessary to restore investor confidence. The scandals were making 401(k)s look worse and traditional pensions that offer a fixed monthly payment look better.

Robert Samuelson, an economics columnist at the *Washington Post*—who is perhaps better classified as a pessimist than as a liberal or a conservative—summed up the new view in September 2002: "One casualty of the slipping stock market has been 'investor politics.' . . . Greater shareholding leads to more—not less—government activism and regulation. It increases—not decreases—the political impulse to tinker with business and the stock market." The new investors were just another interest group who, when the going got tough, got going to the government for help.

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These attitudes are persisting into the current recovery. In December, *Los Angeles Times* reporter Peter Gosselin wrote an article on the investor class that synthesized all the liberal views on it. The expansion of the markets has not changed anything, since wealth in stocks is concentrated. Direct ownership of stocks may change political behavior, but indirect ownership through 401(k)s does not. Nor do 401(k)s improve retirement security; they just confer tax breaks on saving that would have taken place without them.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Before evaluating the claims and counter-claims, it might be helpful to take a step back. From this country's earliest days, there has been interest in having workers own capital. Albert Gallatin, Jefferson's Treasury secretary, said that the "democratic principle on which this Nation was founded . . . should be applied to the industrial operation." He implemented a profit-sharing plan at his glass works in Pennsylvania. These early attempts at worker capitalism, based on the distribution of profits and company stock, largely failed, since their success depended on the fortunes of particular companies. When the companies went under, the experiments were over. The 1892 and 1929 stock crashes, for example, were devastating. Still, the idea survived. In 1939, the president of Sears, Roebuck and Co. told the Senate that profit-sharing "helps to avoid labor unrest and strikes, and gives the employee a feeling of greater security and unity of interest with the employer."

The theoretical basis for the hope was obvious. If workers owned the means of production, labor would no longer be "alienated" in the Marxist sense. The political economy of industrial society had been marked by the constant fear, and recurrent reality, of class conflict. Worker capitalism would diminish, perhaps even end, that threat. The Founders' idea that only property owners should vote could again become a reality—and be reconciled with democracy.

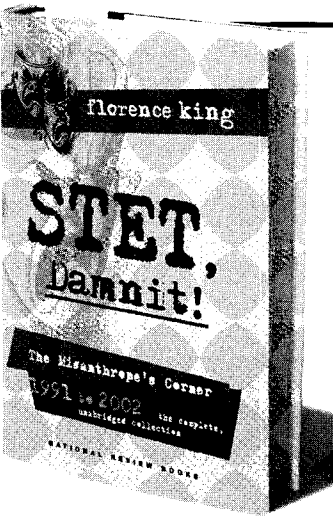
It was not until the last quarter-century that the conditions for widespread worker capitalism materialized. From the 1970s on, companies started shifting from "defined benefit" pension plans to "defined contribution" plans. Under the old-style plans, retirees received payments based on how many years they had worked for the company and how much money they made toward the end of their work years. The precise formula was often the product of negotiation between unions and management. The company was responsible for funding the promises (although the federal government played a back-up role).

Defined-contribution plans, such as 401(k)s, work differently. Typically, employees decide how much of their paycheck they want put into a plan. Employers often match their contribution. Under this arrangement, the size of a pension depends on how much money is put into the plan and how well the plan's investments do. The investment risk has shifted from the employer to the employee.

That was the first precondition for the new investor class. The second came when the federal government decided that contributions to these plans, from employer or employee, would be tax deductible. Third, employees in the defined-contribution plans started to buy mutual funds. Their fortunes as investors did not have to be tied to the fate of one company. They could own a small piece, not just of that company, but of the whole economy (or a broad sector of it). Fourth, the markets began to rise, especially in the 1990s, drawing more people to contribute to their pension plans.

Between 1983 and 2001, the percentage of households owning stock increased from 19 to 52. One might expect that the increased number of small investors would cause the median size of a portfolio to drop. Instead, the median value, adjusting for inflation, more than tripled, from $11,000 to $34,000. (In other words, half of all portfolios were worth more than $34,000 and half less.) The average is higher, swelled by the 29 percent of investors who, according to the Securities Industry Association, hold $100,000 or more. The investor class grew in depth as well as breadth.

Was the shift from defined-benefit to defined-contribution plans a raw deal for workers? In a forthcoming paper for the



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American Economic Review, Dartmouth economists Andrew Samwick and Jonathan Skinner show that "the trend toward 401(k) plans has strengthened the retirement security of current workers." Those plans may have exposed workers to investment risk, but the older, defined-benefit plans carried risks of their own. A worker's wages might not rise to the expected level before he retired. He might change employers several times. The chief policy recommendation that emerges from the economists' research is that it might be wise to require workers who have put little or nothing in their accounts to start contributing more. Debate continues about how much 401(k)s increase saving, but economist James Poterba has shown that workers who can participate in them accumulate more wealth than workers with similar characteristics who do not.

In a 1999 paper for the Cato Institute, Richard Nadler surveyed studies that suggested that worker ownership had produced the "unity of interest" that the president of Sears had sought. Stock ownership appears to increase employee satisfaction and performance, and to reduce layoffs and job turnover.

Free-market theorists had long worried that the political logic of the welfare state was to grow at the expense of the economy. Public policies that imposed net costs would keep being enacted so long as their benefits were concentrated and their costs diffused. The diffusion of share ownership, however, had the potential to connect the direct interests of a mass of voters with the broad health of the economy. Investors were, for example, more well-disposed to free trade than non-investors.

As the new investor class grew, it became less interesting as a distinct group for purposes of polling: Its views converged with those of the electorate at large, because it increasingly *was* the electorate. Investors were, for one thing, more likely to vote than non-investors. The Voter News Service found that 70 percent of voters in the 2000 election owned some stock. They backed Bush by 5 points.

Right before that election, John Zogby did more extensive polling on the investor class. Nadler, who analyzed his findings for the Dean Witter Foundation, identified several variables that influenced the free-market proclivities of investors. Not surprisingly, investors with large portfolios tended to be more conservative politically than those with small holdings. Also unsurprisingly, investors who identified themselves as members of the investor class were more likely to be conservative than those who did not. The longer investors had been in the markets, the more conservative they were. Finally, it mattered how directly investors owned their stocks and how actively they managed them. Owners of individual stocks were more conservative than people who only owned 401(k)s, who were in turn more conservative than passive recipients of income from bonds.

The views of the investor class converged with those of the electorate at large, because that class increasingly *was* the electorate.

PORTFOLIO POLITICS

Stock ownership also seemed to make people more conservative in their political attitudes. Lending plausibility to this thesis is that voters have become more Republican as the investor class has grown. Over the last two decades, voters have been more willing to identify themselves as Republicans, and more willing to vote for Republican governors, congressmen, and state legislators.

Some evidence suggested that this was not a coincidence. A January 1999 Rasmussen Research poll of 6,400 people found that in almost every demographic category, people who owned more than $5,000 in stocks, bonds, and mutual funds were more likely than non-investors to support a capital-gains tax cut and to identify with the Republican party. Men who didn't invest, and made between $20,000 and $40,000 a year, favored the Democratic party by 12 percentage points. Men in the same income range, but with investments, favored Republicans by 3. Six percent of black non-investors supported Republicans, versus 21 percent of black investors. Republicans lost non-investing government employees by 21 points; they lost investors in the public sector by only 4.

The investors of 1999 were more likely to be Democrats than the investors of 1985 had been. The liberal financial journalist Daniel Gross wrote a whole book, *Bull Run*, celebrating that fact. But what was important was the change at the margin. Many Democrats had come into the markets, but some of them had turned into Republicans. The new investors were more Republican than they had been before they started investing.

Surveys suggested that the vast majority of investors were trying to provide for their retirement. The next most cited goal was to finance children's education. Other common goals included the financing of major purchases such as a home, and health care for elderly relatives. There were two interesting things about these goals. First, investors were thinking about the long-term well-being of their families—which suggested, among other things, that they might not panic about temporary reversals in the market. Second, the purposes for which most people invested were also the concerns which Clinton-era liberals exploited to beat conservatives. Social Security, Medicare, education: These were the issues that had ended the Gingrich revolution.

Conservative activists such as Grover Norquist began to see a way to fight back: by expanding the breadth, depth, and self-consciousness of the new investor class. When liberals proposed government spending programs or narrowly-targeted tax credits to meet one of these needs, conservatives would

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respond with tax breaks that let individuals save for the same purposes: medical savings accounts, education savings accounts, etc.

Conservatives and libertarians could support these policies because they thought that savings were subject to punitive taxation as it was. The tax code was biased against saving and toward consumption. When a person brought home income, it was taxed—and if he spent it all, all he had left to pay was the sales tax. He could save some of it instead. But when he used some of his savings to buy something years later, he would find that he paid not only sales tax, but also a tax on the return to his saving. Conservatives want the federal government to tax saving at a neutral rate. That was one of the major attractions of the flat tax and the national sales tax, which many conservatives were agitating for in the 1990s. From this perspective, 401(k)s and IRAs are not tax breaks. They are a limited exception to a general policy of overtaxing saving. Expanding 401(k)s, and creating education savings accounts and the like, are a move toward neutrality.

If the investor-class theory is correct, these policies would bring political as well as economic returns. They would increase both the breadth and the depth of the investor class: both the number of investors and the extent of their stake in the markets. They would appeal to members of that class. Finally, they would create a political dynamic that would tend to correct their own imperfections. At first, people would get a tax break for saving some money for some purpose (such as retirement). But the constituency created by that policy would come to want more. It would, over time, be possible to expand the tax break. The annual limit on IRA contributions could be raised. Withdrawals from IRAs could be allowed to pay for healthcare and educational costs as well as retirement. One of the great flaws of the flat tax, as originally conceived, was that it required comprehensive reform in one big-bang bill. An investor-class strategy could be pursued incrementally.

An April 1997 PaineWebber/Gallup survey illustrated both the problem and the opportunity. Investors, especially those with large portfolios, strongly supported a capital-gains tax cut. But President Clinton's Hope Scholarships—tax credits for college—also polled very well, and did better than the capital-gains tax cut among small investors and young investors. But the most popular policy, at all levels of wealth, was to expand IRAs so as to allow penalty-free withdrawals for first-time home purchases, college tuition, medical bills, and living expenses while unemployed. All of these policies were more popular than the flat tax has been in any poll.

The investor class had other strategic implications for the Right. One, which Norquist has seized upon, is that employees of state governments should join the shift from defined-benefit to defined-contribution plans. The biggest implication concerned our biggest government program: Social Security. It is a defined-benefit pension plan. Liberals have denounced proposals to add a defined-contribution element to it—by allowing workers to invest some of their payments to it for themselves—because it would reduce the government's guarantees and expose workers to investment risks. But as with other defined-benefit plans, the current system exposes them to hidden risks of its own: notably, the very high probability that the government will not be able to make good on its "guarantees."

Everyone knows that Social Security has a financing shortfall. But, for conservatives, the program has two additional problems. There is the return problem: The program offers a lousy deal for young workers. And there is the political problem of an entitlement-oriented electorate. There are ways to solve one problem while exacerbating the others: You could, for example, hike taxes and slash benefits to bring the program into fiscal balance, but that would make it a worse deal for workers. Creating personal investment accounts is the only way to make a dent in all three problems simultaneously. It, too, could be done incrementally. Workers could start out being able to put 3 or 4 percent of their wages that now go to Social Security in a limited number of investment options. Over time, voters would want more say over more of their money.

Social Security reform is the key goal of an investor-class politics, since it would bring almost the entire population into the class.

Conservative think tanks had been churning out papers about the program's insolvency since time was. Nobody much listened. But as Americans grew more comfortable with investing their own money and more financially sophisticated, support for a free-market reform grew—to the point that George W. Bush was able to run on the idea in 2000. That stance would have cost his father the election in 1988, but it helped W. reduce the normal Democratic advantage on entitlements. Social Security reform is the key goal of an investor-class politics, since it would bring almost the entire population into the class.

The Right's internalization of the investor-class theory was, and remains, incomplete. There have not been many attempts to organize the class—to rent brokers' client lists for direct mail, for example. Major investment houses run television advertisements to get people to give them their money. Candidates have not run investment-oriented advertising campaigns that ask people for mere votes. Even President Bush's 2000 campaign, bold as it was strategically, was tactically defensive. It responded to Gore's last-minute ads against Social Security reform by stressing that nobody would have to invest who did not want to. The message was fine as far as it went, but there was nothing to galvanize potential supporters, no explanation that people would be able to build up money in their Social Security accounts just as they did in their 401(k)s.

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The debate over the Clinton-Gore proposal for "universal savings accounts" revealed the persistence of old categories of thought among conservatives. The Clinton idea was to encourage savings and investment among poor people by creating a kind of 401(k) with a tax credit replacing the employer contribution. The credit was to be larger the poorer you were. Most conservatives, especially in the think tanks, were hostile to the idea. Some of their objections may have had merit. But many of them failed to account for the potentially transformative effect of a larger investor class. One conservative complaint was that the new accounts would do nothing to fix Social Security. Nothing? That could be true only if you ignored its political effects—if, that is, you took the existing electorate as a given. But changing the mindset of voters by making them investors *is* a step toward fixing Social Security.

Some analysts on the left misunderstood this point, too. Ruy Teixeira is one of the smartest political strategists on the left, and a skeptic about the idea that the investor class will move politics rightward. He favors the Clinton-Gore idea, and another that would give every American child $500 to start an investment account. He argues that these policies "would build an investor class," but one that favored government activism rather than taking "an individualist approach." But would a tax credit really do much to increase public dependence on government? Capital accumulation would quickly create a property interest larger than the government program that formed it. As Nadler puts it, "A shareholder with $50,000 at market isn't going to vote for anti-market candidates because of a $500 subsidy given at birth. He's looking for a 10 percent rate of return, not a 1 percent subsidy."

Three years of market declines put both the economics and the politics of the investor class to a severe test. But there was no mass withdrawal from the market, and no panicked sell-off.

OUTRUNNING THE BEARS

Three years of market declines put both the economics and the politics of the investor class to a severe test. The investors had told researchers that they were long-termers who would see dips more as buying opportunities than as occasions to panic. During the 1998 "Asian contagion," they had kept their nerve—a performance that compared favorably with that of most financial journalists. But what would they do when a sustained bad spell came?

First and foremost, they lost money. The average 401(k) plan lost about 10 percent of its value. Investors limited the damage by pulling money out of tech funds and, to a small extent, out of stocks generally and into bond funds and other lower-risk investments. But there was no mass withdrawal from the market, and no panicked sell-off. At the low point of the market, the Employment Benefits Research Institute reported that participation rates had fallen—but were still well above what they had been as recently as 1998. The new investor class actually grew by 7 percent, from 49.2 million households in 1999 to 52.7 million in 2002.

Neither did "investor confidence," as measured by the price-earnings ratio investors were prepared to tolerate, plummet. Stock prices fell as earnings did, then started to rise when they came back.

During the summer of 2002, everyone in Washington took the view that the markets needed the reassurance that government was increasing its regulatory oversight of corporate accounting, and then the markets would start rising again. It's not clear how much of the demand for regulation was genuinely investor driven and how much of it was media hysteria. I doubt that investors would really have voted against the Republicans if the latter had voted against regulations. If investors weren't panicked, however, the Republicans were. They kept the question of voters' desire for regulation from being put to the test. Congress passed a major regulatory bill, and the president signed it, in late July. The Dow Jones signaled its approval by falling another 1,400 points over the next ten weeks.

Democrats still hoped to win the midterm elections by casting themselves as more eager to regulate the capital markets that had allegedly failed Americans. They also charged that the Republicans wanted to run Social Security the way Enron's pensions had been run. But as it turned out, national security dominated the election, investors favored Republicans, the Republicans slaughtered the Democrats, and the perfidy of Enron had no apparent effect.

Social Security didn't win the Democrats an election anywhere. The bear market had caused public support for Social Security reform to dip only slightly. In most opinion polls, it fell from the mid 60s to the high 50s. Advocates of reform cleaned up. Voters elected new senators such as Norm Coleman, Elizabeth Dole, Lindsey Graham, John Sununu, and Jim Talent, all of them committed to free-market reform. A similar, though less dramatic, story could be told about the House races. The Republicans who repudiated private accounts, on the other hand, generally lost.

Other issues suggested that a conservative investor politics was alive and well. President Bush's 2000 campaign had included a tax-cut proposal with few pro-investor elements. A near-unanimous Congress added an expansion of IRAs and 401(k)s to his plan in 2001. In 2003, President Bush enacted two more pro-investor policies: reductions in the capital-gains tax and the dividend tax. The dividend tax was a new issue for

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most people, even in Washington, and was academic for many voters since dividend payments to 401(k)s aren't taxed. But it passed, which it probably would not have done ten years before. The capital-gains tax cut passed with very little debate, as a previous, larger cut had passed in 1997 under a Democratic president.

'AN OWNERSHIP SOCIETY'

The White House believes that the investor class is for real. In his State of the Union address, President Bush renewed his call for Social Security reform. He has also revived an earlier proposal for "lifetime savings accounts" and "retirement savings accounts." Aides say he wants to build "an ownership society."

The new accounts would consolidate and massively expand existing savings vehicles such as IRAs and 401(k)s. Contributions to these accounts would be taxed—the administration wanted to avoid any immediate revenue impact—but withdrawals would not be. This policy may prove popular, based on past polling and congressional behavior. The Left is denouncing it for increasing the deficit, unfairly subsidizing the rich, etc. The most promising tactic for opponents will be to say that the new accounts might lead some employers to drop their 401(k)s. That critique is actually even true. Once the tax code allows workers to sock away savings tax-free independently from their employers, it will in some cases make more sense to raise wages and let workers save for themselves. But few people would lose out from that shift.

The savings accounts would not increase the number of investors as much as Social Security reform would—you have to have spare cash to save to use the accounts, whereas Social Security reform would involve investing taxes you already pay—but it might help prepare the ground for it. The president seems prepared to campaign for re-election on these ideas. If the House Republican leadership is reluctant to do so, too bad for them: The president is dragging them along.

Democrats still think they can run successfully against an investor-class politics. John Edwards, in particular, has been taking Bush's policies head-on. Bush, says Edwards, values "wealth" over "work." Republicans want to tax labor income, but not capital income. This theme, Edwards and other Democrats think, usefully highlights Bush's patrician background and "anti-worker" agenda. At the same time, the Democrats may try to come up with policies to help small investors. But what has always been true of the politics of income taxation in America—low-income voters don't want to punish the rich, they want to be the rich—may be even truer of the politics of wealth taxation. Can Democrats really appeal to small investors while also casting doubt on the moral and social worth of the enterprise in which they are engaged?

When Robert Samuelson wrote that investor politics had been a casualty of the bear market, he said that the proposal to cut dividend taxes was evidence that "expanded shareholding abets political activism, not restraint." There may be no inexorable economic laws of history. But my guess is that we are likely to see more such free-market "activism" in the future. The investor class is well on its way to becoming an investor nation. **NR**

■ **IMMIGRATION II**

Tearing Up the Country

Legalizing the illegals will kill jobs and fray the social fabric

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

ALMOST all the debates on President Bush's proposed immigration reforms have concentrated on their economic impact. Those who support the reforms tend to argue that they will help the U.S. economy to overcome a potential labor shortage; those who oppose them claim that they will displace low-paid Americans and depress wages. (I am firmly in the latter camp.) There has been very little discussion of the other ways—social, environmental, legal, racial, and political—in which the U.S. will be affected by what is an "open door" immigration policy in all but name. That would perhaps be understandable if the debate were confined to libertarians who tend to assume that "the market" can magically solve every problem from traffic congestion to chilblains, and to regard any preference for Americans over foreigners as "nativism." But conservatives are supposed to be concerned about such matters as the social fabric and to regard patriotism, loyalty, and national cohesion as important values sustaining a healthy society. And by almost every criterion you can cite, the Bush immigration reforms tear large rents in the social fabric of America.

TEARING THE FABRIC OF COMMUNITY

Let's start with those mixed "socio-economic" problems, such as poverty and unemployment, where statistics yield clear evidence.

Unemployment. There are roughly eight million registered unemployed; still others have given up trying to find work. The U.S. has 3.5 million fewer jobs than when President Bush entered office and the "Clinton recession" took effect. So there is no crying need for immigrant workers. Even in some months in which jobs are created—as 57,000 were, last September—the unemployment rate does not fall proportionately, because even more people are entering the labor force. Between 2000 and 2002, the working-age population expanded by 7.9 million people—of whom 48 percent were immigrants. As economist Edwin S. Rubenstein has shown, the immigrants crowd out both white and black Americans from the new jobs. These job losses, moreover, are occurring when legal immigration is restricted and there are at least some legal risks attached to hiring illegal aliens. Both the "guest worker" program and the amnesty for current illegals would increase the pool of cheap labor and

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remove any taint of illegality. They are therefore certain to increase the unemployment rate.

Poverty. Immigration worsens U.S. poverty in two ways. First, immigrants add directly to the population of the poor. Rubenstein points out that about 16 percent of America's poor are immigrants. But this figure rises to 36 percent when the minor children of current immigrants and the descendants of post-1965 immigrants are added to the mix. A new underclass is being created. Second, immigration adds to poverty indirectly by driving down the income and employment rates of poorer Americans through economic competition. In 2002, poverty rates for black Americans rose and their median household income fell. Many black Americans are being pushed into the underclass by immigration—yet we are proposing to increase the importation of workers. Another effect of this is likely to be pressure for more redistributive and interventionist "anti-poverty" programs and, of course, higher taxes.

So much for the impact on people. What about the impact *of* people? Immigration accounts directly and indirectly for approximately two-thirds of current U.S. population growth; and this process is picking up speed. The Census Bureau had predicted (in its 1990 Middle Series projections) that between now and 2050, the population would grow to 328 million without immigration and to 404 million on present immigration trends—a difference of 76 million people. As Steve Camarota of the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) has shown, however, those projections already look like underestimates in the light of more recent 2000 Census figures. These show that inward migration is higher than previously estimated, by about 100,000 people a year, and that fewer immigrants return home annually. By 2050 we are likely to see an immigration-driven increase of the U.S. population to more than 404 million people *even before the impact of President Bush's liberalization of the law is taken into account.*

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What will that mean? Let's consider, first, the environmental impact. Even the lower 1990 projections suggest that 30 million new houses will be needed to accommodate the extra families. That will mean loss of open spaces, urban congestion, and increased sprawl—and all the political costs of more intrusive regulation and higher taxation as local governments seek to provide water, sewage, and other public services. Take education. In recent years it has been consuming much more in tax revenue—but education standards remain stubbornly low compared to past performance and to foreign schools. Could the reason be that—as the 2000 Current Population Survey discovered—there were eight million children of post-1970 immigrants in public schools? This is equal to the entire increase in public-school enrollment over the last twenty years. Not only are those children adding significantly to the financial strains on schools, but they are also the justification for significant expenditures on bilingual teaching and other services. Yet under the Bush proposals, "guest workers" will be allowed to bring in their wives and families during the (indefinitely renewable) three-year work periods of their contracts. So the costs of immigration to the U.S. education system are likely to grow in line with the size of the guest-worker community.

Immigration is also a major component of the health-care problem. Take merely one statistic from a recent CIS study: Almost half (46 percent) of persons in immigrant households either have no insurance or have it provided to them at taxpayer expense. Nor is that the only cost immigration imposes on the health-care system. The *New York Times*, in an unguarded moment last year, wrote as follows: "The American Hospital Association estimated that in 2000 the 24 southernmost counties from Texas to California accrued $832 million in unpaid medical care, a quarter of which was directly attributable to illegal immigrants. Now, the financial pressures are spreading north into larger cities, pushing the overall unpaid bills well into the billions of dollars and straining a health-care system already stretched thin . . ." Yet, as we noted above in regard to education, the first effect of the Bush reforms will be to allow low-income workers from all over the world to bring their families into America and into to the free emergency medical services that are already strained beyond reason.

A CRISIS OF IDENTITY

When the costs of these various services used by immigrants are added up, they amount to a very severe net cost to the taxpayer. The cost varies from state to state, but it rises to more than $2,000 annually in California. The higher taxes do not produce better public services, because of the extra demands made upon them. Furthermore, an argument heard from supporters of the Bush reforms—that the taxes paid by formerly illegal workers will help finance public services and "save" Social Security—holds no water. For the large additional costs imposed by the much larger numbers of immigrants and their families will more than overwhelm the modest additional revenues that they are likely to contribute as low-paid workers.

But declining public services are not the worst consequence of effectively uncontrolled immigration. That label must be reserved for the sharpening of ethnic tensions that it will set in motion. These tensions used to be the reason American elites supported assimilation: They wanted to mitigate the ethnic conflicts that mass immigration was likely to produce. Eventually, in the 1920s, they decided that an end to mass immigration was necessary if assimilation itself was to succeed in shaping a united America. Modern elites, however, are spoiled by America's past success; they treat national unity as a given and encourage "diversity" from a guilty fear that assimilation amounts to cul-

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tural suppression. This multiculturalism promotes ethnic egotism and hostility, in ways as various as segregated university dorms and racial preferences. So "diversity" aggravates the ethnic tensions inherent in mass immigration rather than restraining them. For instance, it is not hard to forecast that ethnic hostility is likely to be encouraged if growing numbers of newly arrived immigrants, who happen to fall into the "protected classes" of affirmative action, are given preference in employment and promotion over white and Asian Americans. Yet that is what happens—and what will happen more frequently under the Bush reforms.

The extraordinary and dangerous extent to which such ideas have now infected both social life and official policy is outlined in a brave, powerful, and well-documented article in *City Journal* by Heather Mac Donald. Her article should be read in its entirety, but here are its four essential points: 1) Illegal aliens are responsible for a high proportion of serious crimes in the areas where they live. 2) The political and law-enforcement authorities turn a blind eye to all but the most serious of these crimes. 3) Even when they have a criminal alien in custody, they refuse to hand him over to the INS for deportation or to enforce immigration law in general. 4) These failures of law enforcement arise from pressure by immigration-advocacy groups and ethnic lobbies, and also from fear of alienating the large illegal-alien community in cities like Los Angeles.

Two of Mac Donald's statistics will illustrate the argument. In Los Angeles, 95 percent of all outstanding warrants for homicide target illegal aliens, and up to two-thirds of all fugitive felony warrants are for illegal aliens. Many of these warrants are for repeat offenders who have been in custody for earlier offenses and are thus liable to deportation. But they were released without reference to the INS. As several police chiefs told Mac Donald, they would face a "firestorm of criticism" if they either referred to the extent of crime by illegal aliens or suggested enforcing immigration laws against them. These timid calculations are, of course, the direct result of permitting the growth of culturally separate enclaves of illegal aliens.

Failing to enforce immigration law is the "broken windows" theory of crime prevention writ large; it tells people that the government is either afraid or unwilling to enforce the law in general. As a result, more and more crimes unrelated to immigration are committed. Second, the sense of ethnic separateness that mass immigration fosters itself encourages a social atmosphere in which ethnic loyalty trumps civic responsibility even among political leaders. Thus, it becomes acceptable to tolerate even serious crimes by ethnic gangs rather than to insult the community by removing them from the country. And the existence of such cultural enclaves—ones that have established a semi-independence from the rest of the U.S.—tends to attract more people from outside, some to work legally or illegally, others to live outside the law in a more general sense. Yet such enclaves will be strengthened by both the amnesty and guest-worker provisions of the Bush reforms. Indeed, the hidden assumption of the reforms is that since nothing can be done about these enclaves of illegality, they had best be legalized as far as possible. Acting further on that assumption would break America's windows, on a truly massive scale. **NR**

■ **SCIENCE**

The Organic Myth

A food movement makes a pest of itself

JOHN J. MILLER

SOMEWHERE in the cornfields of Britain, a hungry insect settled on a tall green stalk and decided to have a feast. It chewed into a single kernel of corn, filled its little belly, and buzzed off—leaving behind a tiny hole that was big enough to invite a slow decay. The agent of the decomposition was a fungus known to biologists as *Fusarium*. Farmers have a much simpler name for it: corn ear rot.

As the mold spread inside the corn, it left behind a cancer-causing residue called fumonisin. This sequence repeated itself thousands and thousands of times until the infested corn was harvested and sold last year as Fresh and Wild Organic Maize Meal, Infinity Foods Organic Maize Meal, and several other products.

Consuming trace amounts of fumonisin is harmless, but large doses can be deadly. Last fall, the United Kingdom's Food Standards Agency detected alarming concentrations of the toxin in all six brands of organic corn meal subjected to testing—for a failure rate of 100 percent. The average level of contamination was almost 20 times higher than the safety threshold Europeans have set for fumonisin. The tainted products were immediately recalled from the food chain. In contrast, inspectors determined that 20 of the 24 non-organic corn meal products they examined were unquestionably safe to eat.

Despite this, millions of people continue to assume that organic foods are healthier than non-organic ones, presumably because they grow in pristine settings free from icky chemicals and creepy biotechnology. This has given birth to an energetic political movement. In 2002, activists in Oregon sponsored a ballot initiative that essentially would have required the state to slap biohazard labels on anything that wasn't produced in ways deemed fit by anti-biotech agitators. Voters rejected it, but the cause continues to percolate. Hawaiian legislators are giving serious thought to banning biotech crop tests in their state. In March, California's Mendocino County may outlaw biotech plantings altogether.

Beneath it all lurks the belief that organic food is somehow better for us. In one poll, two-thirds of Americans said that organic food is healthier. But they're wrong: It's no more nutritious than food fueled by industrial fertilizers, sprayed with synthetic pesticides, and genetically altered in science labs. And the

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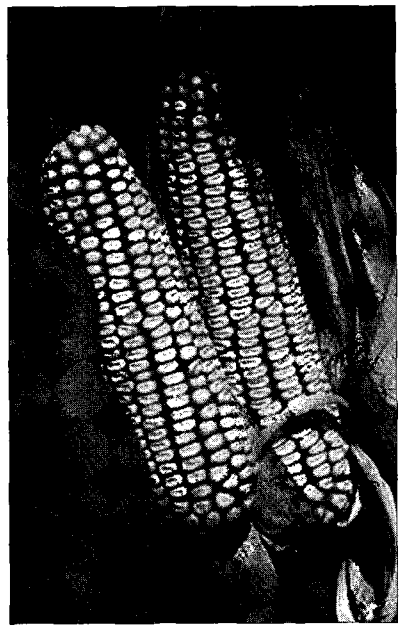
problem isn't limited to the fungal infections that recently cursed organic corn meal in Britain; bacteria are a major source of disease in organic food as well. To complicate matters further, organic farming is incredibly inefficient. If its appeal ever grew beyond the boutique, it would pose serious threats to the environment. Consumers who go shopping for products emblazoned with the USDA's "organic" seal of approval aren't really helping themselves or the planet—and they're arguably hurting both.

NO FEAR

Here's the good news: At no point in human history has food been safer than it is today, despite occasional furors like the recent one over an isolated case of mad-cow disease here in the U.S. People still get sick from food—each year, about 76 million Americans pick up at least a mild illness from what they put in their mouths—but modern agricultural methods have sanitized our fare to the point where we may eat without fear. This is true for all food, organic or otherwise.

And that raises a semantic question: What is it about organic food that makes it "organic"? The food we think of as non-organic isn't really *in*organic, as if it were composed of rocks and minerals. In truth, everything we eat is organic—it's just not "organic" the way the organic-food movement has come to define the word.



About a decade ago, the federal government decided to wade into this semantic swamp. There was no compelling reason for this, but Congress nonetheless called for the invention of a National Organic Rule. It became official in 2002. Organic food, said the bureaucrats, is produced without synthetic fertilizers, conventional pesticides, growth hormones, genetic engineering, or germ-killing radiation. There are also varying levels of organic-ness: Special labels are available for products that are "made with organic ingredients" (which means the food is 70 percent organic), "organic" (which means 95 percent organic), and "100 percent organic." It's not at all clear what consumers are supposed to do with this information. As the Department of Agriculture explains on its website, the "USDA makes no claims that organically produced food is safer or more nutritious than conventionally produced food."

It doesn't because it can't: There's no scientific evidence whatsoever showing that organic food is healthier. So why bother with a National Organic Rule? When the thing was in development, the Clinton administration's secretary of agriculture, Dan Glickman, offered an answer: "The organic label is a marketing tool. It is not a statement about food safety." In other words, those USDA labels are intended to give people warm fuzzies for buying pricey food.

And herein lies one of the dirty secrets of organic farming: It's big business. Although the organic movement has humble origins, today most of its food isn't produced on family farms in quaint villages or even on hippie communes in Vermont. Instead, the industry has come to be dominated by large corporations that are normally the dreaded bogeymen in the minds of many organic consumers. A single company currently controls about 70 percent of the market in organic milk. California grows about $400 million per year in organic produce—and about half of it comes from just five farms. The membership list of the Organic Trade Association includes the biggest names in agribusiness, such as Archer Daniels Midland, Gerber, and Heinz. Even Nike is a member. When its capitalist slavedrivers aren't exploiting child labor in Third World sweatshops (as they do in the fevered imaginations of campus protesters), they're promoting Nike Organics, a clothing line made from organic cotton.

THE YUM FACTOR

There are, in fact, good reasons to eat organic food. Often it's yummier—though this has nothing to do with the fact that it's "organic." If an organic tomato tastes better than a non-organic one, the reason is usually that it has been grown locally, where it has ripened on the vine and taken only a day or two to get from the picking to the selling. Large-scale farming operations that ship fruits and vegetables across the country or the world can't compete with this kind of homegrown quality, even though they do make it possible for people in Minnesota to avoid scurvy by eating oranges in February. Conventional produce is also a good bargain because organic foods can be expensive—the profit margins are quite high, relative to the rest of the food industry.

Unfortunately, money isn't always the sole cost. Although the overwhelming majority of organic foods are safe to eat, they aren't totally risk-free. Think of it this way: Organic foods may be fresh, but they're also fresh from the manure fields.

Organic farmers aren't allowed to enrich their soils the way most non-organic farmers do, which is with nitrogen fertilizers produced through an industrial process. In their place, many farmers rely on composted manure. When they spread the stuff in their fields, they create luscious breeding grounds for all kinds of nasty microbes. Take the dreaded *E. coli*, which is capable of killing people who ingest it. A study by the Center for Global Food Issues found that although organic foods make up about 1 percent of America's diet, they also account for about 8 percent of confirmed *E. coli* cases. Organic food products also suffer from more than eight times as many recalls as conventional ones.

Some of this problem would go away if organic farmers used synthetic sprays—but this, too, is off limits. Conventional wisdom says that we should avoid food that's been drenched in herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides. Half a century ago, there was some truth in this: Sprays were primitive and left behind chemical deposits that often survived all the way to the dinner table. Today's sprays, however, are largely biodegradable. They do their job in the field and quickly break down into harmless molecules. What's more, advances in biotechnology have reduced the need to spray. About one-third of America's corn crop is now genetically modified. This corn includes a special gene that pro-

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duces a natural toxin that's safe for every living creature to eat except caterpillars with alkaline guts, such as the European corn borer, a moth larva that can ravage whole harvests. This kind of biotech innovation has helped farmers reduce their reliance on pesticides by about 50 million pounds per year.

Organic farmers, of course, don't benefit from any of this. But they do have some recourse against the bugs, weeds, and fungi that can devastate a crop: They spray their plants with "natural" pesticides. These are less effective than synthetic ones and they're certainly no safer. In rat tests, rotenone—an insecticide extracted from the roots of tropical plants—has been shown to cause the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. The Environmental Protection Agency has described pyrethrum, another natural bug killer, as a human carcinogen. Everything is lethal in massive quantities, of course, and it takes huge doses of pyrethrum to pose a health hazard. Still, the typical organic farmer has to douse his crops with it as many as seven times to have the same effect as one or two applications of a synthetic compound based on the same ingredients. Then there's one of the natural fungicides preferred by organic coffee growers in Guatemala: fermented urine. Think about that the next time you're tempted to order the "special brew" at your local organic java hut.

If organic-food consumers think they're making a political statement when they eat, they're correct: They're declaring themselves to be not only friends of population control, but also enemies of environmental conservation. About half the world's land area that isn't covered with ice or sand is devoted to food production. Modern farming techniques have enabled this limited supply to produce increasing quantities of food. Yields have fattened so much in the last few decades that people refer to this phenomenon as the "Green Revolution," a term that has nothing to do with enviro-greenies and everything to do with improvements in breeding, fertilization, and irrigation. Yet even greater challenges lie ahead, because demographers predict that world population will rise to 9 billion by 2050. "The key is to produce more food," says Alex Avery of CGFI. "Growing more per acre leaves more land for nature." The alternative is to chop down rainforests so that we may dine on organic soybeans.

There's one more important reason that organics can't feed the world: There just isn't enough cow poop to go around. For fun, pretend that U.N. secretary-general Kofi Annan chowed on some ergot rye, decreed that all of humanity must eat nothing but organic food, and that all of humanity responded by saying, "What the heck, we'll give it a try." Forget about the population boom ahead. The immediate problem would be generating enough manure to fertilize all the brand-new, low-yield organic crop fields. There are a little more than a billion cattle in the world today, and each bovine needs between 3 and 30 acres to support it. Conservative estimates say it would take around 7 or 8 billion cattle to produce sufficient heaps of manure to sustain our all-organic diets. The United States alone would need about a billion head (or rear, to be precise). The country would be made up of nothing but cities and manure fields—and the experiment would give a whole new meaning to the term "fruited plains."

Few activities are as wasteful as organic farming. Its yields are about half of what conventional farmers expect at harvest time.

ST. ANTHONY'S FIRE, ETC.

Fungicides are worth taking seriously—and not just because they might have prevented Britain's corn meal problem a few months ago. Before the advent of modern farming, when all agriculture was necessarily "organic," food-borne fungi were a major problem. One of the worst kinds was ergot, which affects rye, wheat, and other grains. During the Middle Ages, ergot poisoning caused St. Anthony's Fire, a painful contraction of blood vessels that often led to gangrene in limb extremities and sometimes death. Hallucinations also were common, as ergot contains lysergic acid, which is the crucial component of LSD. Historians of medieval Europe have documented several episodes of towns eating large batches of ergot-polluted food and falling into mass hysteria. There is some circumstantial evidence suggesting that ergot was behind the madness of the Salem witches: The warm and damp weather just prior to the infamous events of 1692 would have been ideal for an outbreak. Today, however, chemical sprays have virtually eradicated this affliction.

The very worst thing about organic farming requires the use of a word that doomsaying environmentalists have practically trademarked: It's not *sustainable*. Few activities are as wasteful as organic farming. Its yields are about half of what conventional farmers expect at harvest time. Norman Borlaug, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for his agricultural innovations, has said, "You couldn't feed more than 4 billion people" on an all-organic diet.

This is the sort of future the organic-food movement envisions—and its most fanatical advocates aren't planning to win any arguments on the merits or any consumers on the quality of organic food. In December, when a single U.S. animal was diagnosed with mad-cow disease, nobody was more pleased than Ronnie Cummins of the Organic Consumers Association, who has openly hoped for a public scare that would spark a "crisis of confidence" in American food. No such thing happened, but Cummins should be careful about what he wishes for: Germany's first case of mad-cow disease surfaced at a slaughterhouse that specializes in organic beef.

But then wishful thinking is at the heart of the organic-food movement. Its whole market rationale depends on the misperception that organic foods are somehow healthier for both consumers and Mother Earth. Just remember: Nature's Valley can't be found on any map. It's a state of mind. **NR**

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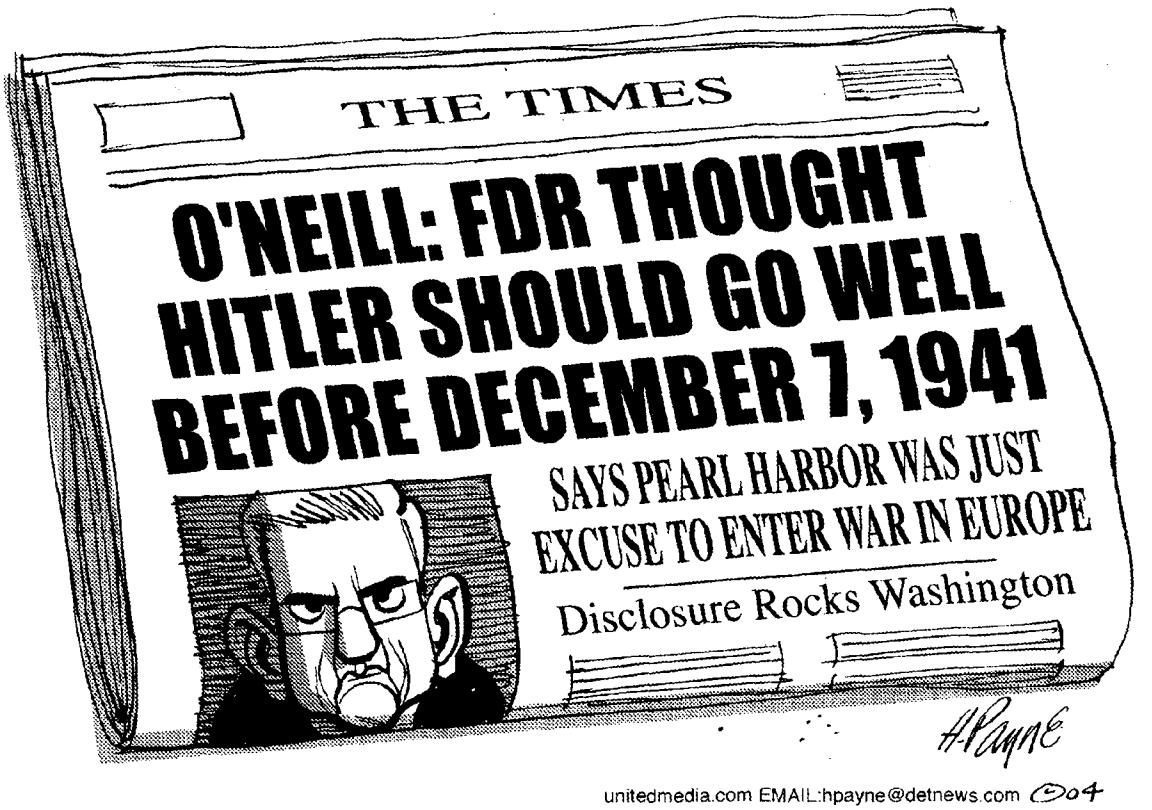
THE TIMES
O'NEILL: FDR THOUGHT HITLER SHOULD GO WELL BEFORE DECEMBER 7, 1941
SAYS PEARL HARBOR WAS JUST EXCUSE TO ENTER WAR IN EUROPE
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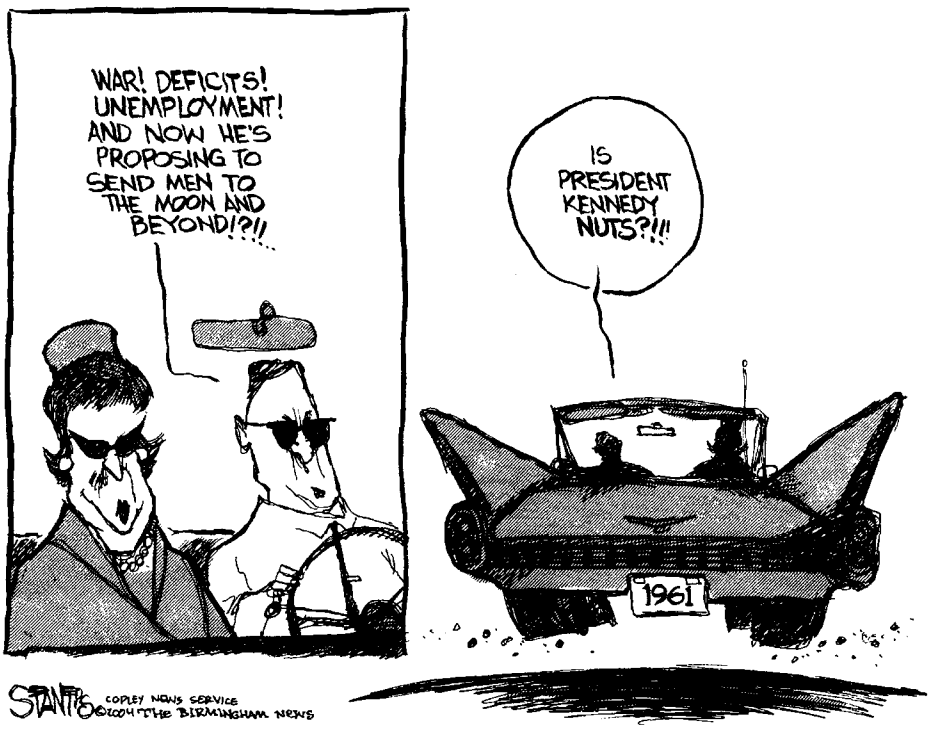
WAR! DEFICITS! UNEMPLOYMENT! AND NOW HE'S PROPOSING TO SEND MEN TO THE MOON AND BEYOND!?!!
IS PRESIDENT KENNEDY NUTS?!!!
1961
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THIS IS A FASCINATING BOOK ABOUT "CLOSING THE RACIAL GAP IN LEARNING"!
DOES IT SAY IT'S ALL WHITE PEOPLE'S FAULT?
NO EXCUSES
"NO EXCUSES" BY ABIGAIL AND STEPHAN THERNSTROM
WELL NO, IT...
WHAT'S MALLARD READING?
OH, SOME RACIST BOOK...

IMMIGRATION

Shut the door, they're coming in the windows;
Pull the shades, they're banging at the door.
In the back, the garden's full of pickers
As the dog, hoarse, gives that lot what for.
Mr. Bush, with one eye on November
While, walleyed, one bats at Señor Fox,
Stiff-arms Mom—still screaming from the pantry,
"Call the cops! They're in my hollyhocks."

—W. H. VON DREELE

"Thank you, Reverend—that was the best wedding I ever had!"

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the long view

ROB LONG

The Candidates' Diaries
Special Iowa Madness Edition™

From the Howard Dean diaries:

. . . which is what it was, a setup, and that's all there is to it. He didn't want me to win. He wanted me to lose. He's got some weird plan he's cooking up to somehow get the nomination. I mean, how else could you explain it? He calls and tells me he wants to endorse me, which is weird, because it really should have been Lieberman he endorses, right? I mean, right? RIGHT? RIGHT?? Damn, just snapped another pencil. Okay. Cleansing breath. Cleansing breath. In to the count of three, out to the count of six. Okay. Okay. But it's odd that I get this so-called quote unquote major endorsement one day, and then the very next day AND I MEAN THE VERY NEXT DAY THE WHOLE THING TURNS INTO A PILE OF . . .

From the diaries of John Edwards:

. . . suddenly like the most popular girl at the dance when a few days ago, it was a lot of jokes about grits and stuff like that. And out of the blue, I get this call from Al Gore and he wants to talk about an endorsement, and I said to him, "Hey, didn't you already endorse Dean?" And then suddenly his voice gets all clenched up and high-pitched, like he's got something strangling him, kind of like that little bald, naked creature from the "Lord of the Rings" movie? The one who keeps trying to steal the ring? Anyway, I tell him thanks but no thanks . . .

From the John Kerry diaries:

. . . not nearly as boring as you'd expect poor people to be, honestly, although they did seem a little too intent on the "talking to the candidate" part of the program and most of them had that kind of sallow, unattractive fatness that comes from, I'm told, a fondness for the deep-fried potato. Oh well. I chuckled tolerantly several times (thank you, media advisers!) trying to approximate that upward twist at the edges of my mouth, you know the ones I mean? When the corners seem to suddenly stretch outward and upward to display in an external fashion feelings of wanting to show happiness? And, also, that thing that comes over some people when they suddenly see puppies, or smell chocolate-chip cookies, or their very favourite colour, or things of that nature? What is that feeling? Not sure. But I do know that when people feel it, they do that thing with their mouths—that outward stretching—and I've learned to do a pretty good job of it myself. And all in all, the event went rather well, and I know that I'm beginning to get more support from my fellow Democrats because just this morning, as I was sipping my tea, I received word that Al Gore had called that night, and would appreciate a return call. Curiouser and curiouser, thinks I. I'll return it later tonight, after a dinner with some poor people . . .

Taken from the walls of Al Gore's observation cell, Brushy Mountain Mental Health Facility:

. . . and then I tells Edwardses, I does, I'll make master such a good endorsementses that he'll surely wins the New Hampshire primarieses and then he'll be presidentses and poor old Al will be happy for master not like that mean master Dean who made poor Al wait on the phoneses and wait and wait until he took poor Al's endorsementses and see where he got to, see, see? Nowhere. And Edwardses says to Al thankses but no thankses and then he hangses up on poor Al and then AL KNOWSES YES HE KNOWSES THAT HE HAS TO ENDORSE THEM ALL! ENDORSE THEM ALLS! MAKE THEM ALLS HIS BIG FRIENDSES! No, no, no, Al, don't do that! Don't endorse another candidate. They'll just drop in the polls and it will ruin them! No one wants to see you again, Al. Your endorsement means that you'll appear with the candidate and that will kill his chances. They're good people, good men, they need support, not your endorsement. NO! NO! I HATE CANDIDATESES AND I WILL GIVE THEM ALL MY ENDORSEMENTSES! But they'll lose, they'll lose, and then who will lead the party? Who will run against Bush in November? Who? WHO? Who? WHO? WHY, WE WILL, MY PRECIOUS, WE WILL! WE'LL RUN AGAIN, MY PRECIOUSES, RUN AGAIN AND WIN THIS TIME, WE'LL WIN! How can we wins, poor Al? How can we . . . can we? YES! Can we, really? YES, YES, MY PRECIOUSES, YES WE CAN! We can? YES! We can, can't we? We can be presidentses of the United Stateses. We can. We can. Who's calling for poor Al? Why it's Senator Kerryses. Must take it. Must take it . . .

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Firebell in the Night

An End to Evil: How to Win the War on Terror, by David Frum and Richard Perle (Random House, 304 pp., $25.95)

NEWT GINGRICH

THIS is a very solid introduction to serious thinking about the War on Terror and the scale of the threat to the United States. In one slender volume, Frum and Perle have outlined an analysis of the danger, a proposed strategy for victory, and a call for the dramatic transformation of many of the key institutions of national security. In judging how out of touch with reality the Democratic front-runners are, one need only read *An End to Evil*: There is more serious analysis and sound strategy in this book than in the policy positions of all the Democratic presidential campaigns combined.

Frum and Perle warn that "now comes the hardest test of all. The war on terror is not over. In many ways, it has barely begun." In contrast to Gen. Wesley Clark's ridiculous promise that if he is elected there will be no terrorist attacks, they admit that "defeats may well occur, for they too are part of war, and we shudder to think how some of our leaders in their current mood will respond." They speak some highly cautionary words: "We can feel the will to win ebbing in Washington; we sense the reversion to the bad old habits of complacency and denial." Watching the Democratic presidential debates, one feels that Frum and Perle are optimists: There is a substantial and noisy minority that would have the Eagle replaced with the Ostrich as the symbol of American character.

The ostrich-like nature of the isolationist Left is captured in this book's description of our enemies and their deadly serious intent to destroy our society:

> There is nothing new about terrorism. What is new since 9/11 is the chilling realization that the terrorist threat we thought we had contained within tolerable boundaries was not contained at all, menacing our well-being as a people, even our survival as a nation. This realization stems, first, from the scale of 9/11, and beyond that, from the apocalyptic vision of the terrorists themselves. . . . The terrorists kill and will accept death for a cause with which no accommodation is possible.

These few lines capture the heart of the first great foreign-policy debate of 2004, and it's not just a debate with Howard Dean and the isolationist Left. When General Clark—a putative centrist—asserts that "nothing is going to hurt this country—not bioweapons, not a nuclear weapon, not a terrorist strike—there is nothing that can hurt us if we stay united and move together and have a vision for moving to the future the right way," he is describing a view that is totally incompatible with the Frum-Perle thesis.

In fact, biological weapons are the greatest threat we face, a threat requiring new defense measures. An engineered virus (flu maybe even more than smallpox) or a well-designed anthrax attack could kill so many Americans—and spread such panic—that the impact on our society would be devastating. And the number of nuclear weapons that terrorists might acquire is far greater than most people realize, because there are more than ample supplies of nuclear material stored in research facilities and in power plants. Clark's assurances that Americans don't need to worry about these weapons as long as we are united is as misleading and dangerous as were Henry Wallace's promises in 1948 that Stalin and the Soviet Union were simply misunderstood by the Truman administration. The fact that Clark is a West Point graduate and retired four-star general makes his factually false reassurances vastly more damaging to American security than anything Howard Dean could say.

Whereas Frum and Perle are clearly worried and believe America is clearly in danger, Clark breezily proclaims that "if I'm president of the United States, I'm going to take care of the American people. We are not going to have one of these incidents." Frum and Perle know better. They know that we have active opponents who hate us and want to destroy us, and they make the powerful point that to whatever extent our intelligence agencies have underestimated the threat of weapons of mass murder and destruction, it actually makes the case for preemption more compelling. They argue (correctly, in my judgment) that if you believe you could lose hundreds of thousands or even millions of Americans if you wait, you have to be prepared to act decisively. The less you know, the more you have to err on the side of preempting a life-threatening and possibly nation-threatening act.

The recent revelations that both the U.S. and the International Atomic Energy Agency had seriously underestimated Iran's nuclear program for the last 18 years, and that Libya has now confessed to having a series of programs it denied for two decades, should be ample reminder that dictatorships lie and that denial and deception are practiced every day by our opponents. The further revelations that Pakistani scientists have almost certainly been involved in the Iranian program are a further reminder that so-called friendly dictatorships can be unstable and uncertain allies.

Of the Left's desire to wait and move cautiously, Frum and Perle note that "quite frequently, the real motive of those who advocate delay is the hope that if we postpone action, somehow the threat will disappear on its own. This isn't policy. It's fantasy." Thus in three short sentences they puncture the self-delusions of the Ostrich wing of American society. We aren't debat-

Mr. Gingrich was Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1995 to 1998. He is currently a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

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ing people on the Left who have serious policy differences. We are debating people who live in a fantasy world in which al-Qaeda is not really a threat.

These are bracing truths. And this is an important book, because it is willing to be blunt about who our most serious opponents are:

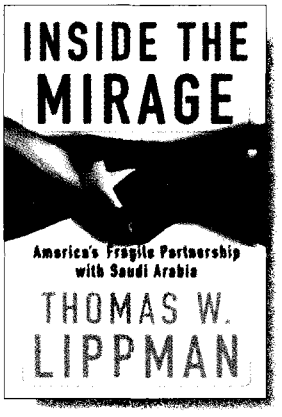
> That cause is militant Islam . . . Yet for many reasons our leaders, and the leaders of other nations, have found it difficult to say so . . . a radical strain within Islam has declared war on us. This strain seeks to overthrow our civilization and remake the nations of the West into Islamic societies, imposing on the whole world its religion and its law. To achieve these cosmic ambitions, Islamic terrorists wish—and are preparing—to commit murder on a horrific scale.

The book makes clear that the war we're engaged in is not a war between civilizations, but a civil war inside Islam, in which we have every interest in ensuring that the irreconcilable fanatics lose.

Because Frum and Perle are prepared to tell the truth about the nature of this war, they can move on to an intelligent discussion of the many changes that will be needed to win the war. And—despite President Bush's eloquent and consistently correct call-to-arms in a long war with terror—much of the Washington establishment still does not understand how big the challenge is. This war is going to be longer, bigger, and harder than most D.C. insiders think. It is going to require complex and profound transformations of most of our instruments of national security (far beyond the Defense Department). The war can be won, but only if we are willing to engage in a serious debate about it. Imagine trying to win the Second World War without a thorough appreciation of Nazism, Fascism, and Imperial Japan. Imagine trying to win the Cold War without an understanding of Communism. That is the burden the Washington elites have put on themselves. They want to win but without the kind of intense, passionate debate over the nature of the war that will be indispensable to victory.

Frum and Perle have done both America and the cause of freedom a real service by writing *An End to Evil*. Every serious citizen should read it and ponder its arguments. **NR**

The Terror Exporters



Inside the Mirage: America's Fragile Partnership with Saudi Arabia, by Thomas W. Lippman (Westview, 354 pp., $27.50)

RICHARD LOWRY

SAUDI ARABIA is an alien, even incomprehensible, land for Americans—closed, illiberal, and backward. And yet, so crucial has the United States been to the development of modern Saudi Arabia that in the country's flag, somewhere between the sword and the words "There is no god but God," there deserves to be stamped, "Made in the U.S.A."

In *Inside the Mirage*, Thomas Lippman recounts the history of the close relationship between the two countries, describing what has often been Riyadh's utter dependence on the United States. There is much to be learned from this book, and given the centrality of Saudi Arabia in the war on terror, a fair amount of it is worth learning. But for Lippman, a former *Washington Post* reporter and a scholar at the Arabist (and reportedly Saudi-funded) Middle East Institute, the Saudis' radical evangelism overseas is almost an afterthought, very odd considering that it has been going on for more than two decades and has had world-historical significance.

An air of nostalgia hangs about *Inside the Mirage*, as if Saudi Arabia could still be considered that weirdly charming country with which we have always had warm relations, disturbed only by the occasional dispute over whether or not women should be permitted to wear miniskirts. September 11th should have obliterated this attitude. Whatever the Saudis are, they aren't quaint. But that is not to say there isn't much to be remembered fondly about the relationship, as Lippman demonstrates throughout his book.

The founder of modern Saudi Arabia, King Abdul Aziz, got a favorable impression of Americans from his contacts with Christian missionary doctors and a businessman named Charles Crane, who offered to help him search his country in the early 1930s for natural resources. In Crane, Lippman writes, Aziz ran across "the same phenomenon the king had encountered in the American doctors: an infidel foreigner who was willing to help him and asked nothing in return. From that time onward, the king inclined toward American interests in economic and strategic decisions."

During World War II, the United States began to realize the oil potential in Saudi Arabia, and FDR declared the country strategically important to the U.S. A 1945 meeting between Roosevelt and Aziz aboard the *USS Quincy* in Egypt's Great Bitter Lake dramatized the new relationship, and its cultural contradictions. The king wanted to bring his own sheep on board for fresh killing, and his 48-person entourage insisted on sleeping in tents pitched on the deck of the *USS Murphy* on their way to the meeting.

The influx of American corporations over the years would be the best thing to happen to Saudi Arabia. For the longest time, the U.S. oil company Aramco was basically the Saudi treasury, department of health and human services, and department of education all rolled into one. "Inside Saudi Arabia, Aramco was a virtual government," Lippman writes. "Frozen meat and other food for the royal entourage was imported by Aramco and stored at oil company facilities . . . Aramco staff translated government documents into English and company documents into Arabic. As schools opened, the company supplied textbooks and other materials about Arabian history and culture." And on and on.

The company provided invaluable training to Saudis, creating future genera-

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tions of the country's political leadership. One former Aramco worker who went on to become minister of petroleum described Aramco as "a beacon in Saudi Arabia, and indeed the Middle East and the world, in terms of the substantive, orderly, and lasting transfer of technology it has accomplished."

Saudi Arabia had no real tradition of government, and it showed. In the 1940s, the national treasury was held in a trunk carted around by the finance minister. Aziz's feckless successor, King Saud, liked to drive around the country throwing gold and silver coins out from his car to the ordinary folks. In the 1960s, 60 percent of the country's oil income was being spent on the royal family. In an important turn, Prince Faisal won a long-running, internal royal-family battle with Saud over control of the country and imposed some discipline on its finances (at one point, Faisal discovered the treasury had only $100 in it).

But there were limits to Faisal's enlightenment. He was a great promoter of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Henry Kissinger has written about his experience with Faisal: "Oblivious to my ancestry—or delicately putting me into a special category—Faisal insisted that an end had to be put once and for all to the dual conspiracy of Jews and Communists. . . . When Faisal went on to argue that the Jewish-Communist conspiracy was now trying to take over the American government, I decided the time had come to try to change the subject."

The Jews were the proximate cause of a defining crisis in U.S.-Saudi relations. To protest U.S. assistance to Israel during the 1973 war, the Saudis imposed an oil embargo, which forced Aramco to do the bidding of the Saudi government at the expense of the U.S. government. The upper hand in control of Saudi oil resources had definitively shifted. The Saudis subsequently nationalized Aramco.

Counterintuitively, the oil embargo made relations between the U.S. and Saudis even closer. American officials realized all the more the importance of Saudi oil, and the two governments became increasingly intertwined, with the U.S. aiding the basic operation of the Saudi government—through technical assistance and other know-how—in exchange for oil-price stability and massive Saudi purchases of U.S. goods. By the 1990s, the Saudis had bought $93.8 billion worth of military equipment and advice from the U.S.

This arrangement was cozy and beneficial for both sides. During the Cold War, both the United States and Saudi Arabia opposed the Soviet Union and the Soviet-aligned nationalism of Nasser. Then the Cold War ended and another common enemy emerged when Iraq invaded Kuwait. But the forces that would make Saudi Arabia—at best—a problematic ally were already at work. The seizure by radicals of the Great Mosque in Mecca in 1979 rattled the royal family and prompted it to give religious extremists greater influence at home and over Saudi spending overseas.

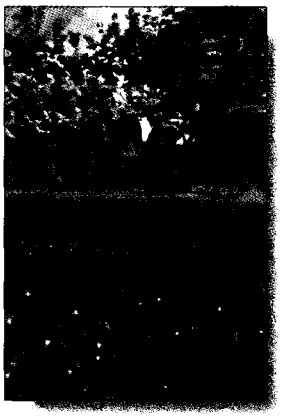
The billions spent on promoting the Saudi variant of Islam, Wahhabism, literally changed the nature of global Islam and created a network of radicalism throughout the world. This is the sea in which al-Qaeda swims. How the U.S. intervention in Iraq turns out is important to the war on terror, but the future of Saudi Arabia is even more crucial. At the moment, Iraq is an importer of Islamic radicalism, Saudi Arabia is an exporter (among other things, the Saudis have their fingerprints on the radicalization of Pakistan, where Saudi-funded madrassas have turned out countless fanatics).

It is in dealing with this crucial issue, and the questions related to it, that Lippman falls down. How best for the U.S. to stop the flood of Saudi funding overseas? Is Crown Prince Abdullah a true reformer? How does Saudi money in Washington, spread to think tanks and former U.S. ambassadors, stymie forthright debate on Saudi relations (an uncomfortable question for someone at the Middle East Institute)?

It's not that Lippman is wrong about these questions; he doesn't address them at all. He sometimes gives the impression that one of the chief problems in U.S.-Saudi relations post-9/11 is that well-educated Saudis are offended by tighter U.S. visa policies.

If you want to know how American housewives fared living in Saudi Arabia in the 1950s, *Inside the Mirage*, with its detailed accounts of how Americans experienced Saudi Arabia, is for you. If you want to know about the Saudi role in the great international crisis that is the war on terrorism, you'll have to turn elsewhere. **NR**

Pariah Lies



North Korea: Another Country, by Bruce Cumings (New Press, 241 pp., $24.95)

PAUL HOLLANDER

ANYONE who knows the history of the colossal and surrealistic misperceptions of Communist regimes on the part of many Western intellectuals will find this volume at once familiar and distinctive. It is appearing against the background of the reasonable expectation that something might have been learned from the long history of such misperceptions and their resourceful encouragement by the officials of these regimes. Most of these states no longer exist, and from their ashes emerged further evidence confirming their mendacity and disproving the propaganda they steadfastly disseminated for both domestic and foreign consumption.

Bruce Cumings, a professor at the University of Chicago, has strangely chosen North Korea—the only surviving Communist state to preserve intact the worst, most oppressive characteristics of such systems—as the recipient of his affections and the object of his efforts at

Mr. Hollander's books include *Political Pilgrims*, *Anti-Americanism*, and most recently *Discontents: Postmodern and Postcommunist*.

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This will be *NR*'s second trip to **Bermuda**, and we're happy to be returning to this beautiful island. It never gets old: Sauntering through these charming cities of **Hamilton** and **St. George** (still steeped, like the customary afternoon tea, in the traditions of British colonial life) during the day, enjoying the nightlife, relaxing on the rose-blushed sands of Bermuda's gorgeous beaches–all of this and more (like the numerous excellent excursions Radisson will provide awaits you. Oh yes: The *Navigator* will *also* make a lengthy visit to **Norfolk**, from which fascinating tours to Colonial Williamsburg Jamestown, Yorktown, and other Virginia landmarks are available.

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Wed./May 12	New York City		5:00PM	
Thur./May 13	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars evening cocktail reception
Fri../May 14	Hamilton	8:00 AM		afternoon seminar late-night smoker
Sat./May 15	Hamilton	Overnight		afternoon seminar evening cocktail reception
Sun./May 16	St. George	7:00AM	4:00PM	
Mon./May 17	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars late-night smoker
Tues./May 18	Norfolk	7:00AM	5:00PM	evening cocktail reception
Wed./May 19	New York City	8:00AM		

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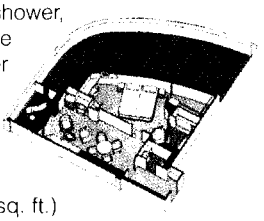
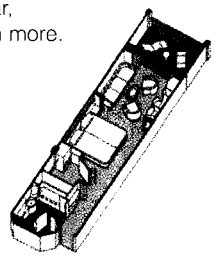
MASTER SUITE Supreme luxury quarters (1,067 sq. ft.) feature private verandah (106 sq. ft.), king-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), whirlpool bath/shower, floor-to-ceiling windows, dressing room, large sitting area, VCR, mini-bar, refrigerator, butler service, walk-in closets, and much more.



Category MS
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 9,499 P/P

BALCONY SUITES Spacious room (301 sq. ft.) features private verandah (55 sq. ft.), king-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), whirlpool bath/shower, dressing room, large sitting area, VCR, mini-bar, refrigerator, floor-to-ceiling windows, and much more. "Penthouse" level has Butler Service.



Category B "Penthouse"
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,799 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 7,499

Category D (no butler service)
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,399 P/P
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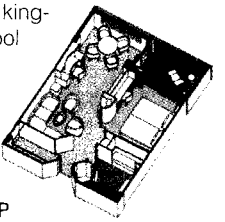
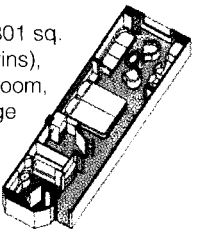


Category NS
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 6,999 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 12,999

WINDOW SUITE Large and comfortable (301 sq. ft.) features king-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), whirlpool bath/shower, sitting area, dressing room, VCR, mini-bar, refrigerator, walk-in closet, large ocean-view windows.



Category NS
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,999 P/P
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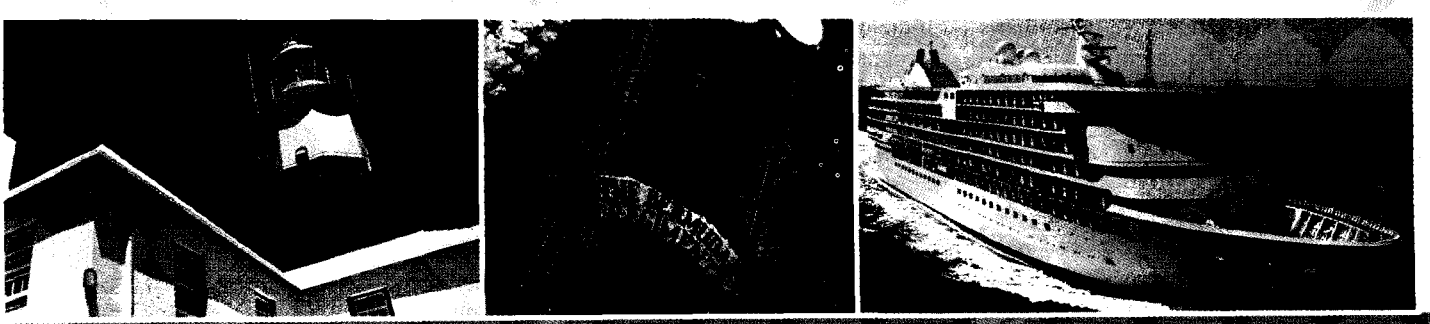

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political rehabilitation. These sentiments are inspired in part by his respect for the Korean people, culture, and tradition—and by his failure sufficiently to distinguish such traditions from the realities of the murderous regime in the North.

Cumings belongs to the long line of Western academic intellectuals who are fully persuaded that the United States bears responsibility for much that is wrong with the world, including the existence of political systems and movements that are its most dedicated adversaries. Not only does he believe that the U.S. is largely responsible for the (defensive) brutality and pugnacity of North Korea, he is equally eager to acquaint the reader with the achievements of this regime—which include "compassionate child care" and superior health and education benefits (the kind all Communist regimes routinely claim among their accomplishments). He approvingly quotes a writer who averred that prior to the recent economic disasters, typical North Koreans lived "an incredibly simple and hardworking life but also [had] a secure and happy existence, and the comradeship between these highly collectivized people [was] moving to behold."

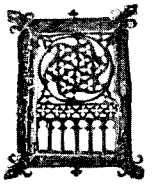
The author is eager to dispel any impression of North Korean aggression against the South (which in fact culminated in its 1950 invasion); he even uses the disingenuous argument that the conflict was a civil war and that the 38th parallel is "not an international boundary." He dwells on the sufferings the U.S. inflicted during that war, and thus creates a framework for his apologetic reinterpretation of the paranoid garrison state North Korea has become. His emphasis on the inhumanities of U.S. air warfare is reminiscent of the argument that the U.S. bombing of Cambodia somehow prompted the massacres of Pol Pot. Thus a very familiar theme pervades the narrative: "Beleaguered" North Korea (like other Communist systems, whose conduct was not entirely praiseworthy) did some bad things, but it was due to feeling and being threatened and victimized by the U.S.

In a disclaimer early on we are assured that the author has no sympathy for the North; there are indeed critical statements scattered throughout the book, including the admission that the regime does not promote human freedom (but this admission is hastily qualified with "not from any liberal's standpoint"). Cumings has no love for the grotesque personality cult of the leaders, but he cannot resist remarking about "U.S. support for dictators who make Kim Jong Il look enlightened"; nor does he endorse the garrison state (he notes that conscripts have to serve ten years). But he also laments the bad press North Korea gets. He has little doubt that the misconceptions about this much-maligned political system are rooted in the ignorance of Americans (blended with racism) and nurtured by the sensationalistic mass media and unscrupulous politicians.

The reader's doubts about the depth and genuineness of Cumings's criticisms of the regime are further stimulated by the fact that he was considered sympathetic or dependable enough by the North Korean authorities to be allowed (or invited?) to make a television documentary. Such doubts deepen when one reads his many contemptuous references to the defectors from the North and their "tales" (which reminded me of Noam Chomsky's dismissive references to the "tales" of Cambodian refugees about the atrocities they witnessed).

In a triumph of selective perception, he manages to interpret the most damning indictment of the North Korean gulag available—*The Aquariums of Pyongyang*, by Kang Chol-Hwan and Pierre Rigoulot—as providing support for his views of the system. As he sees it, the book is "interesting and believable" because it is *not* the "ghastly tale of totalitarian repression that its original publishers . . . meant it to be." But it is precisely and resoundingly that, as any reader without a soft spot for North Korean tyranny would readily discover. Cumings writes that "conditions were primitive and beatings were frequent [in the camp described in that book] but the inmates also were able to improvise much of their upkeep on their own . . . small animals could surreptitiously be caught and cooked." He delicately refrains from mentioning that these small animals were mostly rats, and a regular part of the narrator's diet. That book makes abundantly clear that hunger and malnutrition were endemic; inmates stealing food or trying to escape were executed. Cumings also fails to mention these public executions the inmates were obliged to attend, stressing instead that families were commendably kept together and that "death from starvation was rare." In any event, he suggests, these deprivations are put into the proper perspective by our "longstanding, never-ending gulag full of black men in our prisons"—which should disqualify us from "pointing a finger."

As one reads on, it becomes an increasingly compelling question how it is possible for a professor of history at a great institution of learning—Chicago—to have any sympathy for such a regime. One explanation may be that, like other similarly disposed visitors to Communist countries, Cumings was favorably impressed by the remnants of a traditional social order reflected in the conduct and interaction of ordinary people, their respectful manner and sense of community. On his conducted tours he rejoiced in the prevailing orderliness and cleanliness—the little old ladies sweeping the streets (presumably without any official encouragement!)—and contrasted these appealing conditions with their absence in South Korea and other non-Communist Third World countries. Among the revealing and novel information he provides is that "every citizen 'who travels, checks into a hotel, or dines at a public restaurant is required to carry a sanitation pass,' verifying that he or she has been to a public bathhouse within the past week."



Cumings is aware of the flaws of North Korea, but they have no perceptible emotional impact on him. He generally withholds moral judgment, owing to his zeal to rehabilitate it and to his reflexive indulgence in moral equivalence (the U.S. and South Korea, in this view, are no better).

Sections of the book offer some useful information about the cultural-historical background and recent economic difficulties of North Korea and about the personal lives and character of its two leaders (dead and living). It is however of far greater interest as a document illustrating the remarkable persistence of the political attitudes of academic intellectuals durably estranged from their own society and predisposed to find virtue in others opposed to it, and in the surviving idealized social arrangements of the past. **NR**

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■ SHELF LIFE ■

Minds over Matter

MICHAEL POTEMRA

MICHAEL FUMENTO's science reporting is well-known for its fearlessness in challenging conventional wisdom. In his new book, *BioEvolution: How Biotechnology Is Changing Our World* (Encounter, 510 pp., $28.95), he offers an unabashed defense of scientific progress. "The potential of biotech," he contends, "is so broad and research is advancing so quickly that it can bring us all the miracles that scientists say it will, without necessarily involving processes that many of us find morally or religiously offensive." (In addressing the furor over embryonic stem cells, for example, Fumento points out that adult stem cells show every bit as much medical promise.)

The story Fumento tells is breathtaking, as scientists work on solving the puzzles of biology in order—among other things—to cure diseases, regenerate human organs, and improve the global food supply. To read this book is to stand in awe of man's intellect: It's a God-given instrument by which we can probe the mysteries of Creation, and then use what we have learned to perform dazzling works of mercy. Just one example from Fumento's generous book will have to suffice:

> Almost one-third of the world's population is believed to be outright anemic, and about one-fifth of all malnutrition deaths appear to be caused by a lack of iron. A lot of this is because these people's primary food is rice. And rice has little or no iron, right? Well, that's what I originally thought, too, but in fact rice actually contains a fair amount of the mineral but it also contains a molecule called phytate that locks up about 95 percent of the iron in the plant. This prevents humans from absorbing it. So [scientists Ingo Potrykus and Paolo Lucca] obtained a gene from a fungus that codes for the enzyme phytase, which breaks down the phytate, eliminating the molecular "dam" that blocks iron absorption. And while most enzymes are knocked out by the heat of cooking, this one carries a mutation allowing it to withstand such high temperatures. Yet another gene that Lucca added . . . doubles the amount of iron in the rice grains. . . . Thus the plant not only has more iron; far more importantly it now has iron in a form the human body can use.

As scholar Michael Novak has eloquently pointed out, the world was designed as a horn of plenty; the heroes of Michael Fumento's book are helping us unlock its riches.

■ *The "American Way": Family and Community in the Shaping of the American Identity* (ISI, 211 pp., $15), by Allan Carlson of the Howard Center for Family, Religion, and Society, is a fascinating contribution to the history of social policy. Carlson examines a number of 20th-century episodes, each in an enlightening manner. He shows us Theodore Roosevelt encouraging procreation and proclaiming birth control "the capital sin" against national survival; *Time* magazine founder Henry Luce promoting a "New America" in which economic and demographic dynamism would build on a foundation of highly traditional cultural morality; and, three decades later, Ronald Reagan trying "verbally to resurrect the American identity built on religious morality and shared family life."

At the heart of Carlson's narrative is the rise and decline of what is called "social feminism" or "maternalism": the idea that respect for women's rights should be supplemented by a social consensus that women's natural calling is to raise children. One of the book's most interesting chapters demonstrates that FDR's New Deal was a thoroughly maternalist project, encouraging mothers to stay at home and care for their children instead of seeking wage-paying jobs; it is for this reason that feminist historians excoriate FDR to this day. World War II was, temporarily, to

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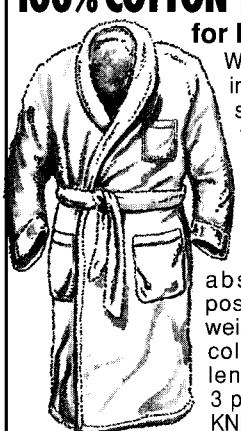

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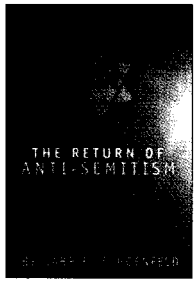
undo the New Deal's conservative accomplishment by drawing married women into war-production factories; but social policy after the war reverted to a hiring preference for men.

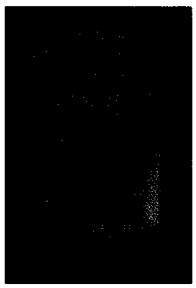
Over the last half-century, maternalism has collapsed. "The maternalists," Carlson tells us, "were blind to the fragility of their hold on the federal government. A bureaucratic structure peopled with the maternalists' members and disciples could ensure that a governmental system built to undergird the traditional family would do just that." But, he points out, a shifting public opinion or elite preference could use the levers of government just as easily to solidify a system in which women are encouraged to work outside the home—which is exactly what has happened.

■ In *The Return of Anti-Semitism* (Encounter, 193 pp., $25.95), *Commentary* senior editor Gabriel Schoenfeld examines the dramatic new forms taken by an age-old disease. "Today," he writes, "the most vicious ideas about Jews are primarily voiced not by downtrodden and disenfranchised fringe elements of society but by its most successful, educated, and 'progressive' members. . . . One is less likely to find anti-Semites today in beer halls and trailer parks than on college campuses and among the opinion makers of the media elite."



This new anti-Semitism of the privileged classes has been widely commented upon; so has the blatant anti-Semitism of the Islamic world. Leon Wieseltier, literary editor of *The New Republic*, has warned against an excessive fretfulness over this issue—most notably in a 2002 *New Republic* cover story reminding readers that "Hitler Is Dead." Schoenfeld acknowledges that "at present, the world does not face another Adolf Hitler." But, he points out, "we inhabit a planet in which there are weapons of mass destruction, where there are terrorists working assiduously to obtain such weapons, and where many of those same terrorists openly proclaim a desire to murder Jews." In this context, it might not be unreasonable to think that Jews—and all other people of good will—could have *even more* to fear from anti-Semitism than did the people of the 1930s.

Schoenfeld provides abundant detail on the strains of anti-Semitism that are currently burgeoning, and concludes that even if their virulence is countered with "a sufficient show of strength and determination . . . what has been ignited may not so easily burn out." But overall, the book makes a strong case for a Western commitment to total victory in the War on Terror; it's true that defeating the Osama bin Ladens of the world may not stamp out every last ember of global anti-Semitism, but it's equally certain that failure to defeat them would have consequences too horrible to contemplate.



■ The encounter between faith and reason remains a central problem for man as he tries to come to grips with reality in its fullness. Political philosopher Thomas L. Pangle addresses this issue in a challenging manner in his most recent book, *Political Philosophy and the God of Abraham* (Johns Hopkins, 285 pp., $39.95): "If the Bible is true, then what is called for above all is obedience to the biblical God as simply authoritative. Philosophy as such—so long as it remains true to itself—cannot wholly surrender to such obedience, but philosophy can strive to understand what it might mean to do so. . . . The danger for us today is that we remain at too great a skeptical distance ever to enter into such a dialogue . . . and therefore we risk wallowing in longing for God instead of grappling with God—as Jesus and Socrates, each in his radically different way, teach us to do."

Much of the book is devoted to a close reading of key passages in the first half of the book of Genesis. The fall of man in Genesis 3 involved the first couple's decision to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil; great minds have wrestled for millennia with the question of how a just God could have viewed the pursuit of knowledge as bad and unworthy of man. Pangle suggests that in the divine perspective this is simply not man's proper calling: "Insofar as the Bible presents the knowledge of good and evil as demonic, it does so out of a recognition that to seek to know adequately what is good and evil necessarily entails a quest for an autonomy that is not compatible with obedience in any strict sense." Man's struggle after the fall, therefore, involves seeking "the path of the self-conscious submission or trammeling of independent judgment that is implicit in genuine obedience. We must in mature judgment decide to become again as children." Of this kind, Pangle points out, was the trust of Abraham when he showed himself willing to obey God's command to sacrifice Isaac.

This dense but rewarding book raises questions that people of faith need to confront as they do intellectual work on issues of justice.

■ What is it, precisely, that American conservatives are trying to conserve? One of the best answers ever given to this question is Russell Kirk's 1974 masterpiece *The Roots of American Order*, which has just been reissued (ISI, 534 pp., $18), with a new foreword by Forrest McDonald. Kirk writes that "our modern moral order . . . runs back to the burning bush on Mt. Horeb"; and it was "from Israel, even more than from the Roman jurisconsults, [that] America inherited an understanding of the sanctity of law." From this starting point, Kirk proceeds to nothing less than a history of Western civilization, focusing on the principles and achievements that later formed the spirit of the American project: the Greeks' reflection on justice in society, and within man himself; the Romans' understanding of virtue as "energetic manliness" and of law as both "the right reason of the intelligent man [and] a divine gift"; Christian "habits of thought and action"; England's development of the supremacy of the rule of law; the Reformation's emphasis on "the priesthood of all believers," which planted the seeds for a system that would emphasize the protection of individual rights; and the Enlightenment's republicanism. All of these influences percolated in the Philadelphia Convention and the amazing mechanism of ordered liberty it codified. "To live within a just order," Kirk writes, "is to live within a pattern that has beauty." **NR**

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■ ART ■

The Greek's Way

ROGER KIMBALL

Some artists are known to the public chiefly as caricatures of themselves. Mondrian is one example. The fact that Mondrian made ravishing pictures of flowers and haunting landscapes is overshadowed by our association of the name "Mondrian" with the image of a certain type of pared-down geometrical abstraction in primary colors.

Mr. Kimball is managing editor of *The New Criterion* and author, most recently, of *Art's Prospect: The Challenge of Tradition in an Age of Celebrity.*

Something similar can be said about Domenikos Theotokopoulos (1541-1614), the Cretan-born artist known to posterity by his Spanish sobriquet: El Greco, "the Greek." El Greco's distinctive mannerisms—drastic foreshortening and elongation of figures, acidulous colors, an aura of mystical asceticism—have burned an image of his work into our collective unconscious. His idiosyncrasies—the idiosyncrasies of his oft-reproduced paintings—have assured him a high degree of name-brand recognition. The memory—the association—is not wrong, exactly, but it is partial. El Greco, like Mondrian, was more than his received reputation. It is one of the great merits of the large overview of El Greco's work that just closed at the Metropolitan Museum in New York (and that opens at London's National Gallery in February) that it introduces us to the full spectrum of this remarkable artist's achievement. Consider, for example, "A Lady in a Fur Wrap" (late 1570s), a full-boned, secular work that might have been painted in the 18th instead of the 16th century. El Greco's fervid hankering for the transcendent is on holiday in this urbane and elegant portrait.

El Greco lived through one of the great hinges of history: the Protestant Reformation; the defeat of the paynim foe (how I've been longing for a chance to use that phrase!) at Lepanto, 1571; the Council of Trent and the Counter-Reformation; the high hopes and crushing defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Not for nothing did some ironically malevolent Chinaman wish that his enemies might "live in interesting times."

El Greco was born to a prosperous family in Crete, which was then a possession of the waning Venetian Republic. His early training as an icon painter permanently inflected his work with a Byzantine astringency, but his emigration to Venice in 1567 softened and enlarged his palette, adding a tonal sumptuousness to the brittle energy of his pictures. Like nearly everyone in Venice at the time, El Greco came under the spell of Titian (1485-1576)—well, he rubbed up against it, anyway. You can see the influence of Titian, all right, but El Greco was far too prickly a character to be

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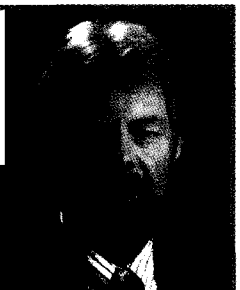

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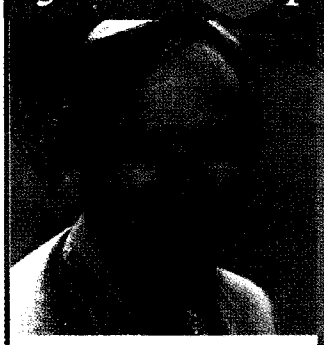

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anyone's disciple, personal or stylistic.

There's a lot we don't know about El Greco, but his reputation as a touchy, litigious character survives. He moved to Rome in 1570, found protection in the Palazzo Farnese, but was writing to Cardinal Farnese in 1572 to complain that he "did not deserve to be thrown out and sent away because I had committed no fault." We do not know what El Greco is alleged to have done to give offense, but the voluminous if sketchy record of his squabbles with friends and patrons suggests that giving offense was something he came by naturally. Although the work of Michelangelo (1475-1564) clearly made a deep impression on his own work, El Greco is said to have offered to replace Michelangelo's "Last Judgment" at the Sistine Chapel with something else just as good but more decorative.

Such remarks were not appreciated by his fellow painters in Rome, and El Greco is said to have found it convenient to leave precipitately. He went briefly to Madrid, in 1576, and then on to Toledo, the tense, cosmopolitan city that became his home and in which he did most of his greatest work. Fray Hortensio Félix Paravicino, a noted poet and Trinitarian friar, was one of El Greco's closest friends and the subject of one of his greatest late portraits (c. 1609, in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). In one of the four sonnets that he wrote about El Greco and his work, the friar noted that although "Crete gave him life," Toledo gave El Greco "his brushes and a better homeland."

True, though El Greco never fully assimilated himself to Toledo. In an amusing ditty, the American versifier George Starbuck wrote:

> Nomine Domini
> Theotocopoulos,
> None of these prelates can
> Manage your name.
>
> Change it. Appeal to their
> Hellenophilia.
> Sign it 'El Greco.' I'll
> Slap on a frame.

In fact, El Greco continued to sign his work with his full name; the shorthand by which we know him today was used in his time as a mildly dismissive ethnic synecdoche.

This exhibition—the first full-scale show devoted to his work since 1982—is a marvelous trove. Some works are familiar, like the Metropolitan's famous portrait of (probably) Cardinal Niño de Guevara (1600-1601), inquisitor general and archbishop of Seville. A formidable chap, His Eminence. The billowy folds of his red robes, accentuated by the diaphanous white lace of his surplice, provide a field of opulent luxury that contrasts powerfully with the cardinal's head: meticulously barbered beard, thin lips, extraordinary bespectacled eyes—keen, penetrating, but somehow smiling. Modern commentators, including the authors of the exhibition catalogue, tend to assume that El Greco meant to portray an ominous figure. We read about his "frightening, hawkish intensity," his right hand "impatiently—almost convulsively—grasping the arm rest," etc. I think that misses the lucid dignity that El Greco registered in this amazing work.

There are a handful of other pictures in this exhibition that will be familiar to museum-goers. But most will be unknown to all but specialists. As many commentators—including the curators—have noted, one comes away deeply impressed by the sheer modernity of El Greco. Yes, but it is a Byzantine modernity—by which adjective I do not mean tortuously involuted, but pictorially distilled, flattened out, unanchored to the material world. El Greco's influence has been intense and long-lasting. It began in his own day with artists like Velázquez (1599-1660), whose work is inconceivable without the example of El Greco. Van Gogh and Gauguin both acknowledged his influence, as did Picasso and Jackson Pollock. We cannot blame El Greco for that, any more than we can blame him for Francis Bacon, who made something of a cottage industry out of caricaturing El Greco and Velázquez.

Despite his enormous influence, however, El Greco's reputation has suffered more than its share of troughs. In his book *The Spanish Journey* (1910) the great German art critic Julius Meier-Graefe recounts a six-month trip he took into Portugal and Spain in 1908. He went to Spain looking for Velázquez, he said, but what he discovered was El Greco. At that time, El Greco's work was almost completely ignored outside Spain; it didn't fare much better in Spain. As late as 1881, the director of the Prado called El Greco's pictures "absurd caricatures" and regretted they could not be removed to provincial museums. In 1906, the Spanish government considered selling some of his work abroad.

Meier-Graefe helped spark a renewed interest in El Greco's work. He visited the El Grecos in Spain again and again, going not only to the Prado but also to out-of-the-way monasteries and private collections. He went to the Escorial palace a dozen times to see "The Legend of Saint Mauritius," a painting that he finally concluded is "the most beautiful picture of mankind." Perhaps. Indisputable is the gripping visual intensity of this familiar but unendingly mysterious painter. **NR**

THE END OF THE WORLD

"We're going," they said, "to the end of the world."
So they stopped the car where the river curled.
And we scrambled down beneath the bridge
On the gravel track of a narrow ridge.

We tramped for miles on a wooded walk
Where dog-hobble grew on its twisted stalk.
Then we stopped to rest on the pine-needle floor
While two ospreys watched from an oak by the shore.

We came to a bend, where the river grew wide
And green mountains rose on the opposite side.
My guides moved back. I stood alone,
As the current streaked over smooth flat stone.

Shelf by stone shelf the river fell.
The white-water goosetailed with eddying swell.
Faster and louder the current dropped
Till it reached a cliff, and the trail stopped.

I stood at the edge where the mist ascended,
My journey done where the world ended.
I looked downstream. There was nothing but sky,
The sound of the water, and the water's reply.

—DANA GIOIA

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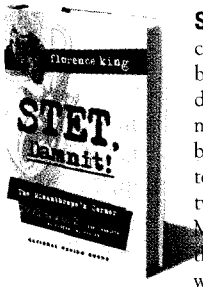

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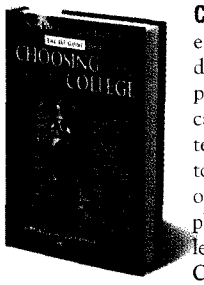

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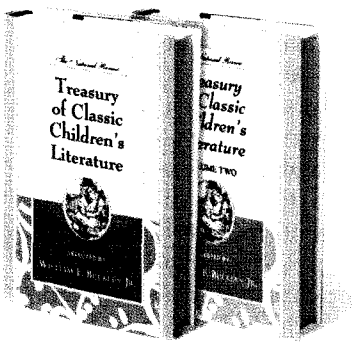

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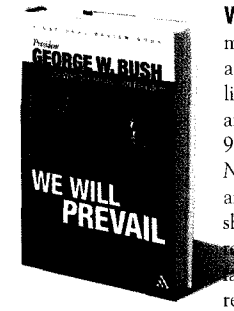

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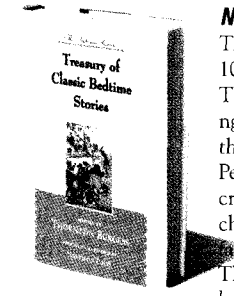

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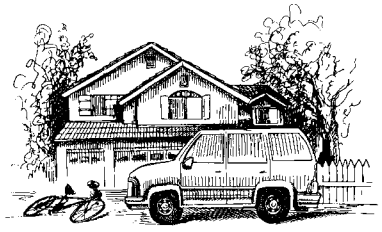
■ THE STRAGGLER ■

The Decline of Stuff



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

In his book *The Missing of the Somme*, Geoff Dyer describes some WWI film footage he has been watching of soldiers on the Western Front:

> Every piece of equipment looks like it weighs a ton. There were no lightweight nylon rucksacks or Gor-tex boots. Things were made of iron and wood . . . Everything weighed more then.

He goes on to quote some lines from the war poet Ivor Gurney:

> We marched and saw a company of Canadians,
> Their coats weighed eighty pounds at least.

This passage came to mind the other day while I was talking to my plumber. I had called him in to get an estimate for removal of some pipes. Our house came to us with an old-fashioned heating system: huge ancient cast-iron radiators upstairs, baseboard pipe heating downstairs. We put up with this for some years. Then last fall, having come into a little money, we called in a firm to install a spiffy new system that blows air through vents. The project left us with a great deal of now-redundant old galvanized-steel and copper piping to be removed, not to mention those cumbersome great radiators. So I called in the plumber for an estimate to remove it all.

The plumber sized up the job briskly and gave me a quote. It was a little more than I wanted to pay, so I attempted some bargaining. This probably wasn't appropriate, but I have picked up the bargaining habit from my wife, who has the Third Worlder's refusal to take any quoted price at face value, and will haggle over the price of a subway token. Surely (I said to the plumber) the extracted metal piping would itself be worth a good deal as scrap?

The plumber smiled a superior smile at my ignorance. Scrap metal? Forget it. Yes, there were a few dealers still in business on Long Island, but they took in only copper and brass, and didn't give much for that. It was not worth trucking it over there.

Surely, I wondered aloud, there must always be some use for metal. Bobbing up to the surface of my mind came dim folk-memories of London park railings being dismantled in WWII, to be melted down and used to build battleships. And even in my own childhood, in the 1950s, we had campaigns of collecting the foil caps from milk bottles for . . . for . . . for some large national purpose, I forget quite what. At any rate, I had had it impressed on me at an early age that metal is important, that key components of the world are made from it. Why, the World Trade Center was made from it: I have seen one of the support beams from those doomed towers, preserved in the State Museum at Albany—a thirty-foot girder that must have weighed many tons, grotesquely twisted back double on itself into a shape like one of those little colored ribbons people wear to declare their sympathy with some disease or other.

The plumber disabused me. No, nobody wants scrap metal. Not worth the trouble of transporting it. He then—this was a garrulous fellow—embarked on a long harangue about the quality of construction materials, which, according to him, was declining fast.

"Faucets! You wouldn't believe what people are paying for faucets! A thousand dollars for a faucet! And the things are *no good!* They don't *last!*"

From faucets the plumber's monologue broadened out into a mighty river of complaint, covering building materials of all sorts. Roofing!—time was, a roof would last you thirty years. Now, with these new, lighter materials, figure ten. Paint!—the health lobbies and environmentalists had pushed oil-based paints out of the market in favor of latex-based. Now even the latter were under attack from some group of busybodies. "Pretty soon we'll be down to watercolors—you'll have to repaint your house every time it rains!" Bathtubs and toilets, window frames, wallboard, siding—all the stuff of the world was becoming lighter, flimsier, less potent, less durable.

I decided against the estimate, got rid of the plumber, and set about dismantling the master-bedroom radiator. Its end-bosses pleaded forlornly that it had been forged by the Weil-McLain Co. of Erie, Pa., in that remote past of wood and iron and eighty-pound greatcoats. The thing was far too heavy to lift in one piece, but once I had cut through the binding rods at top and bottom and whacked at it with a sledge-hammer, it came apart in 17 sections, each weighing 17 pounds. Three hundred pounds of cast iron! I called one of those scrap dealers for prices. Cast iron? A penny a pound. The plumber had been right, it wasn't worth the trouble of transporting it.

For a few moments, schlepping the radiator sections two by two out of the house, I was at one with those infantrymen in the trenches of Flanders. Seventeen pounds of cast iron in each hand, I thought of how stuff once was: the great shining cuboids of coal my father used to have delivered, which he broke up with a special hammer; the first pair of boots I had in the Army Cadets, stiff black leather with metal hobs on the leather soles; wooden matchsticks in split-wood matchboxes, houses built of brick, cans made of thick unyielding metal, pants of wool worsted. Everything now is so flimsy and disposable. There is a line of science-fiction stories—most recently, the movie *The Truman Show*—in which the physical world turns out to be a sort of mock-up or theater set, made of two-by-fours covered with painted canvas. It sometimes seems like that.

Yet perhaps that is not such a bad thing for our souls. Our ancestors—certainly those doughboys in the trenches—were well supplied with daily reminders of their own mortality. In our world of relative peace, good health, and long life, we have few such. Perhaps all this flimsiness and insubstantiality will serve instead.

> We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life

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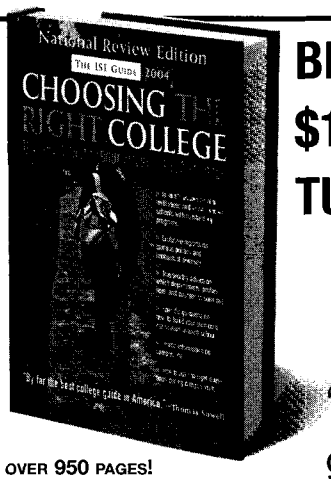

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on the right

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Carping from Brits

NEW YORK, JANUARY 5

At the end of the year we have much to be grateful for, and a fair amount to wonder about. For instance, the tenacity of some British critics of our undertaking in the Mideast, nicely identified in an essay by Mark Steyn in the *Daily Telegraph*.

Looking back on British pessimism, he cites Simon Jenkins of the *Times*, whose column on March 28 was headed, "Baghdad Will Prove Impossible to Conquer."

Well, such is the nature of miscalculations. But miscalculations are generated not only by mangled strategic reckoning, but also by animus. Mr. Steyn refers unkindly to the "autopilot frothing of leftie vaudeville turns like Harold Pinter." Pinter on politics is simply Pinter astray with a perforated spleen, but what about such British eminences as (Sir) Max Hastings, the former editor of the *Daily Telegraph*?

"It is hard not to hate George Bush," Hastings wrote the other day. "His ignorance and conceit, his professed special relationship with God, invite revulsion. A few weeks ago, I heard a British diplomat observe sagely: 'We must not demonize Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz.'" But "Why not?" Sir Max wants to know.

"The U.S. defense secretary and his assistant have implemented coalition policy in Iraq in a fashion that makes Soviet behavior in Afghanistan in the 1970s appear dextrous."

What is it about Wolfowitz that does such things to people? Steyn looks into the question: "Wolfowitz is a demonic figure to the anti-war types for little reason other than that his name begins with a big scary animal and ends Jewishly."

That's an irresistible turn on the question, but returning to an even bigger wolf, we have the cowboyphobia of Max Hastings. There is a hostile reaction to Bush-style, a revulsion for the way in which he approaches matters.

Bush is the modern enemy of convolution. If there is an ambiguity alive in his system, it has resisted lifetime energies at extirpating it. It's true that we have reason to be suspicious of anyone who does not understand differences in approach, but it is also true that there comes a moment when the leader needs to be resolute, not equivocal.

Hastings et al. need to remind themselves that Bush is a product of democratic processes, and that if his resolution were simply the fruit of genetic intellectual bigotry, he'd have been found out. American politicians can't simply get away with apodictical speech. When Hastings wonders about Bush's "special relationship with God," he is caviling, really, at style rather than substance. Any leader who acknowledges God necessarily assumes for himself a subordinate position in human affairs. There is nothing in the catechism of Bush's relations to God that hasn't an equivalent in Lincoln's, except that Lincoln's language infused what he said with a kind of biblical nobility that put off such carpings as Sir Max's.

Consider an aspect of Bush's directness, which was his obiter dictum that Saddam should face execution. Well, Hastings opposes capital punishment. But in order to make that case, he wants to tie up Bush in OK Corral syntax. "Bush is a long-standing enthusiast for capital punishment, who believes there is nothing like a good hanging to purge the soul." So Hastings demands satisfaction from his end of the world. Why should Bush compromise Blair, who opposes capital punishment? "If one believes judicial killing is wrong," Hastings asks, "then how is it possible to make exceptions?"

The answer to that predicament is—by making exceptions. Israel managed this in the case of Eichmann. Ann Clwyd, a fire-eating Labour left-winger who nevertheless backed the war, opposes capital punishment but has spent time in Iraq, and is persuaded that Saddam's intermittent amnesties have generated a suspicion of sustained detention. If you are looking for an empirical reason to hang Saddam, it is to dissipate any public fear that one day he might be out on the streets, free to begin it all over again.

The anti-Americanism of individual critics of U.S. policies is never unexpected, though it is disappointing that Hastings has arrived at his present position after serving ten years as editor of the *Daily Telegraph*. But the sharpness of his speech doesn't predict shaky U.S.-British foundations. The temptation of the sharp killer-phrase tends to get the better of many writers on both sides of the Atlantic, and there is no capital punishment in prospect for abusers, thank God.

Bushwhacking Immigration

NEW YORK, JANUARY 9

Something had to give, and when that is so, democracy is at its most useful. The mess in our immigration laws festers. And if it is so that President Bush was moved to try to do something about it in anticipation of November's national election, why should that surprise, let alone dismay us?

We shouldn't allow our general relapse on illegal immigration to blind us to our own acquiescence to the impasse brought on. For those who believe in free movement of labor such a position would never survive a national plebiscite. Beginning in 1965, we simply surrendered on the subject of Western Hemisphere immigration. The 1965 law effectively eliminated restrictions on immigration from this hemisphere through its family-reunification provisions. It can be argued that much the same thing would have happened without that law. In the U.S., the average wage is $32,000, ten times the average Mexican wage. Laws attempting to seal the border were in the tradition of King Canute ordering the tide to stop.

But to acknowledge that the kind of insulation we needed in order to repress Latino immigration was not easy to devise does not excuse ignoring the laws we had. We discovered little by little, under the pressure of local politics and judicial intervention, that restricting immigration is not done by pen strokes. If

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the nation had asserted itself on immigration policy, we might have made some headway. Eight million illegals testify to the irresolution of our immigration laws. We discovered that you can't do something that California, Arizona, Texas, and Florida won't permit: so we surrendered.

The vital aspect of that surrender touches down on a great issue we are facing, which has to do with free trade. In one recent debate among the Democratic presidential hopefuls, most of those who had voted for NAFTA and the Chinese trade agreement were apologetic for having done so.

Phil Gramm, running for the GOP presidential nomination in 1996, confessed to a friend, "I am an economics professor and spent eleven years explaining the law of comparative advantage, and one of the things I discovered is that you can't explain free trade in a three-minute debate with Pat Buchanan."

Except for Joe Lieberman, nobody, in the recent debate, was prepared to say: "There are advantages to Americans in economic mobility." In the Nineties, we had economic gain coupled with high employment. This was owing substantially to the free movement of capital and manufacturing. But in political forums on such subjects, one sees only the plant that shut down and was restarted in Siam.

That was a devastating backdrop, and free-trade laws tend to disappear as visionary imposters.

We have had all of those divisions before. And those who plead for free trade have to take into account that a ruthless implementation of its dictates is otherworldly, as if a nation resolved to enforce the marriage vow. Extra-economic measures are going to be taken to protect American jobs. The challenge is to invoke these with eyes wide open on the broader perspective: the free movement of capital in fact benefits the American consumer, who in turn employs the American worker.

The Bush immigration plan is so complicated, so dependent on enforcement agencies we don't have and don't really want, that it's impossible to say what lies immediately ahead for the proposed bill. Probably it won't be passed by this Congress. Certainly campaign issues will center on it. There is a great deal we could be grateful for if it could be done free of politics. But then nothing really is.

Vote for Me, Here's Why

NEW YORK, JANUARY 13

You have forty-five seconds to tell the voters why they should write your name down in the Iowa caucus.

Whistle! . . . Whistle! Thank you very much. We will now hear from . . .

THE awful smell in the room is human vanity. It is always a factor. The most self-sacrificing monk has vanity. He is asking the Lord to note the special privations he is undertaking in His name. Where banality reigns, you have the field marshal who wants to kill three times as many of the enemy as they succeed in killing of our own men, and the parliamentarian who wonders whether history will note his skills in contriving a majority vote for that bill. This gets into very big time when it is a man given 45 seconds to tell the audience why he should win the Iowa caucus.

The reason this is so difficult is that we are being asked to identify ourselves with a national cause which is not easy to decipher. All the candidates agree that things are not going, in Iraq, as well as they should go. Dr. Dean says that we should never have gone to Iraq in the first place. Well, you might say, er yes, maybe we shouldn't have gone to Iraq. But voting for Dean doesn't transport you back to February 2003, with the option of telling the planes to turn off their engines, and the ships to go back out to sea. So what do you actually accomplish?

Rep. Gephardt is determined to protect American jobs, many of them eliminated by the movement of capital to parts of the world where labor is cheaper. He has a point. Something ought to be done to prevent an erosion of U.S. jobs. Oh, and he also wants health insurance—no wrinkles, no fine-print deductions—for young Americans, which is a very good idea.

Sen. Edwards from North Carolina is telling us—he can't fool me, I've been around a bit—that he is a good looking guy who made his own way up the ladder; he's obviously bright and persuasive, and he's in favor of . . . a bunch of things. And he'd look good, that cold day next January, bringing back memories of the Golden Boy. Why not? Why not have a handsome president? There's no civil rights act against that, is there?

And so it goes, in a season in which vanity simply cannot be given the subordinate attention vanity deserves. The candidates' problem is the absence of a true cause. The people who are running for president of the United States are doing so because they want to be president of the United States. No candidate embodies a national objective. We don't have a federalist arguing the need for cohesion against the democrat, the visionary leader who sees a nascent country reaching all the way to the Pacific Ocean up against a provincial, the petitioner who argues that Negroes are human, or that the Communist challenge must be resisted at all costs.

What the candidates are having to do is to mutate opposition to George W. Bush into a national cause. Everything else is—vanity. The problem is that Bush doesn't really lend himself to that treatment. Oh, there are habits of his that maybe grate, and he is spending a lot of money, and he is losing American lives in Iraq. But that does not constitute a cause. And the candidates who are given 45 seconds to declaim their willingness to serve as president aren't having great success in transforming their vanity into a cause in which legions should march.

If you ponder Sen. Kerry after 45 seconds, what have you got? Somebody in favor of good education, good health, reasonable international commitments, and, well, perhaps some appreciation given to the 21-year old who fought in Vietnam. So? Make him president?

But Bush is serving as president, and he's going to run for a second term, and what are the arguments against letting him do that?

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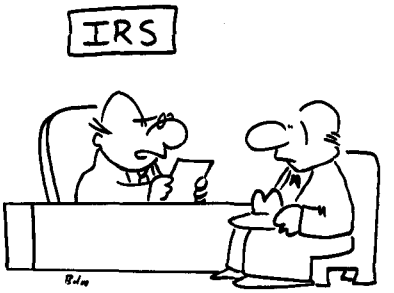

"Well, don't just sit there—go out and earn some more money."

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

Hollywood Nation

I don't believe there were any speeches at the actual "ceremony," but there's been plenty of retrospective commentary about the nuptials of Mrs. Jason Allen Alexander, previously and subsequently Miss Britney Spears. Miss Spears had a night on the town in Vegas and woke up the next morning married to Mr. Alexander, the latter having neglected to observe the niceties by formally asking Miss Spears's management and record company for her hand in marriage. A judge stepped in and sorted it out, and the bride was restored to the status quo ante.

And then folks began weighing in. Andrew Sullivan was among the first to observe that the Britney-Jason union was not exactly the best advertisement for President Bush's view that marriage is "sacred": She and her pal are allowed to make a two-day travesty of marriage, yet a devoted lesbian couple who've been together for half a century are denied benefit of clergy. National Review Online's own Deroy Murdock followed this up with a column citing various other unsatisfactory poster children for heterosexual family values—proud but unwed dad David Letterman, home-wrecker Jerry Seinfeld—and demanded to know, "Where was the social-conservative outrage?"

He has a point, though not quite the one he thinks he's making. The salient fact about Britney is not that she's straight or gay but that she's a celebrity, which is an orientation all its own. The rules are different. A year or two back, when Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman split up citing irreconcilable differences in height, the celeb-magazine editors reacted as the rest of us would if Gram'pa ditched Grammy after 73 years and set off to find that hootchy-kootchy dancer he'd met in a bar in Yellowknife in 1923. Tom and Nicole had been married for, oh, over half a decade, which, in celebrity years, is practically a diamond anniversary. But eventually they too went the way of all the other "long-term" Hollywood couples—Bruce and Demi, Alec and Kim, Dennis and Meg, Rin Tin Tin and Lassie. The last two were doomed from the start: Like Britney, Rin just woke up one Sunday morning with a helluva hangover and a strange furry tongue lapping his chops. Fortunately, a veterinarian in Palm Springs was able to get the whole thing annulled.

Say it ain't so, Al

BETTMANN/CORBIS

But I mention them because celebrities have always been carrying on like this. Hollywood in the Twenties was a lot more debauched than, say, Des Moines. Very occasionally, word leaked out, and Fatty Arbuckle wound up with a one-way ticket on the Oblivion Express. But most of the time it didn't. My father loves Al Jolson, "the world's greatest entertainer"—"Mammy," "Swance," "Rock-a-Bye Your Baby with a Dixie Melody," he can do 'em in his sleep. He's seen *The Jolson Story* a thousand times. But if ever we're arguing late at night and I want to bring the conversation to a close, I usually just mention the rumors about Jolson being bisexual. "He was not!" roars my dad.

"Yes, he was!" I yell back. "It was an open secret. When they remake *The Jolson Story*, he'll be played by Rupert Everett."

"Rubbish!"

"Okay, Ian McKellen."

At which point, Pa usually flounces off in a huff, or makes the point that it doesn't count because in those days everyone in Hollywood was bisexual. Even if that's not true, it might as well be: The normal rules didn't apply, as long as you were discreet. The normal rules still don't apply, but now there's no need to be discreet. Half a century ago, Ingrid Bergman gave birth out of wedlock and it almost finished her career. Now, single mom Jodie Foster is put on the cover of *People* magazine as a paragon of motherhood, and everyone thinks it's bad form to inquire who or where the dad is, never mind whether a woman who thinks the only function of a father is to get the globules of bodily fluid into the beaker and then push off is really such a great role model.

In a way, the license accorded to celebrities is only the republican version of that accorded to your average crowned head back in the good old days. But it was inevitable that, in a country with as vigorous a democratic spirit as America, this would eventually have to be conducted in the open: Instead of the divine right of kings, Washington has citizen legislators; instead of droit du seigneur, Hollywood has citizen sex fiends. The real question implicit in Deroy's column is whether an entire society can live like celebrities. I don't know why they'd want to—most celebrities I've known are rather sad creatures, and, as with her accelerated marital collapse, poor old Britney, 22 going on 49, seems to have reached that unhappy stage well ahead of schedule. But the story of the last 30 years is the mainstreaming of rock-star morality: instant gratification, do your own thing, whatever's your bag.

Jodie Foster and her turkey baster are rich enough to weather any unintended consequences of their fling, but the evidence suggests that, for the general population, defining celebrity down is more problematic. "Oops! I Did It Again" is easy for Britney to say. **NR**

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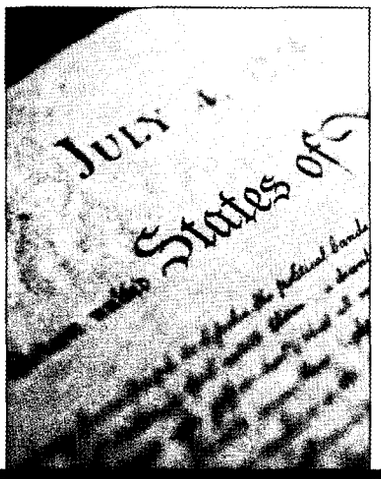

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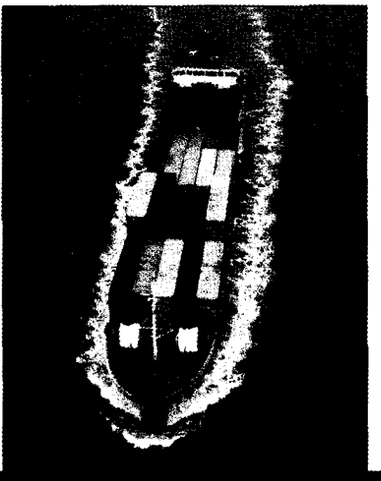

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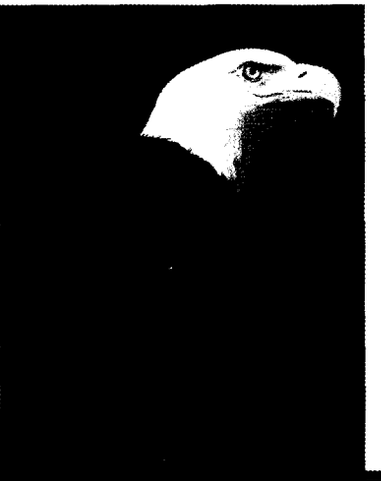

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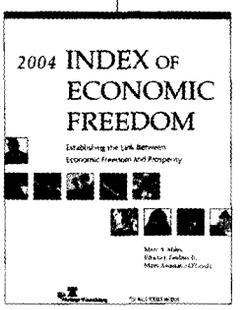

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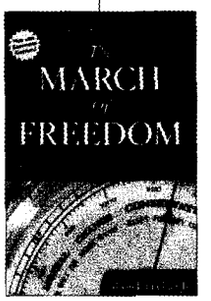

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